Doctrine of the Priesthood

Let Virtue garnish thy thoughts unceasingly; then shall thy Confidence wax strong in the presence of God; and the Doctrine of the Priesthood shall Distil upon thy soul as the Dews from Heaven. (D & C 121:45)

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The Father and the Son
The Two Gods of
The Old Testament

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Introduction

For more than a hundred years, a controversy has existed among the different sects over the identity of the God of the Old Testament — whether God the Father or God the Son. In the midst of all this, each side of the argument has mustered their own set of proof texts from the Bible in support of their own position. In recent years the same question has been raised in Mormon circles over the Book of Mormon and the Doctrine and Covenants. In all of this, the biblical problems relating to the controversy have been explored, but to date no definite answer, which brings harmony out of chaos, has been presented to the world.

This then becomes the focus of this issue of the Doctrine of the Priesthood — Who does the Biblical text identify as Yahweh, God of the Old Testament — God the Father, or God the Son? In the midst of this discussion, many proof texts are brought forward and considered in a new light. In the process, an unexpected answer to the question emerges, which both contradicts and complements both sides of the controversy.

In about 1998 the Southern Baptists sent out hundreds of their members to hang thousands upon thousands of anti-Mormon Books (which they had placed in plastic bags) on the door knobs of every front door, on every house in the State of Utah. In the end the remainder of these thousands upon thousands of books were stored in a storage shed in Roosevelt, when after the renters failed to pay, the owner finally hauled them to the city dump.

After passing these books out, the Southern Baptists held their June 9th, 10th and 11th, 1998 Convention in the Salt Palace, at Salt Lake City. This they did in an effort to flaunt their Anti-Mormon beliefs under the noses of Latter-day Saints in Utah.

In a effort to respond to these anti-Mormon books and the Anti-Mormon video which they had circulated, 1,200 of these pamphlets were printed up with a special introduction that was written to those

who attended the convention. These pamphlets were passed out by my children, to the Baptists, as they came to the doors at the Salt Palace, to attend their Conference — just as they had often passed out literature at Temple Square during Conference.

Many of the Baptists felt angry that we would come to their conference and pass out our literature — yet what we passed out was a Biblical study of what is found in the Bible regarding the Godhead, rather than a militant attack on their religion, as they had published against the LDS. Many of the Baptists took these booklets, carried them through the door, and dropped them in the trash. In turn, we would go into the Salt Palace, take the booklets out of the trash, and passed them out again to someone else. As they clearly demonstrated, by and large, the Baptists were unwilling to meet a Biblical challenge to their faith and doctrine, and a few even responded with militant letters.

What follows is the introduction which was added to this pamphlet for the Baptist Convention:

A Statement
to Attendants of
the June 9th, 10th, 11th, 1998
Southern Baptist Convention
held in
Salt Lake City, Utah

For many decades your church has shown great interest in the continued growth and influence of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, more commonly referred to as the "Mormons". My first introduction to the Baptist interest in Mormonism came through the writings and publications of one of your ministers — Walter Martin, who might accurately be described as an anti-Mormon Crusader. He was the self proclaimed Southern Baptist "expert" on "Cults", among whom he included the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses and the Seventh Day Adventists. Martin had been a guest on the Phil Donahue show, had lectured abroad, and for years maintained his own talk radio show: "Mister Bible Answer Man", which was aired in many cities throughout the United States.

My initial introduction to Martin came through a tape recording which my younger brother brought home in 1973, when he returned from his mission. The tape was titled: "The Maze of Mormonism" — it was a recording of a staged meeting held by Martin in a camp of "Born Again Christians". This tape is still on sale in "Christian" bookstores, and over the years I have purchased many copies to give to my friends. The principle focus is the Mormon teaching on the Godhead — the plurality of Gods and the Adam-God Doctrine, the preexistence of man, and the ultimate "Deification" of worthy Christians, which doctrines were taught by the Prophet Joseph Smith and President Brigham Young.

Martin very forcefully comes to the conclusion that Mormonism's polytheistic teachings on the Godhead inherently exclude them from the pale of Christianity. As he then expressed himself, the Mormon religion might use biblical terminology in expressing their beliefs, but their understanding of those terms does not square with Biblical Monotheism. For these reasons, Martin argued that the Mormon religion could not accurately be defined as a bona fide Christian church.

I recently obtained a video cassette which has been produced and published by your church: "The Mormon Puzzle [—] Understanding and Witnessing to Latter-day Saints", wherein the same questions are raised and the same conclusion is again affirmed. As I understand it, this video is but the encore to your present convention, wherein many thousands of you have boldly chosen to come to the Mormon Capital in Salt Lake City, and reaffirm your old verdict on The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints.

My own personal interest in the Adam-God doctrine commenced in 1970, about 3 years before I was given a copy of Martin's tape. I had been raised in the LDS Church, but it was not until 1970 that I first discovered that President Brigham Young had actually taught that Adam was God the Father. I then commenced a research on the subject which ultimately led me into the archives of the LDS Church, wherein there are more than 200 boxes of unpublished manuscript materials, pertaining to the life and teachings of President Brigham Young.

I had been studying early Mormon Doctrine since 1970, and by 1974 had collected two volumes of documents numbering 600 pages. When

I obtained a copy of Martin's tape, my interest extended to include the Biblical doctrine as well, and I began to en masse a library on the Bible, which, as per Martin's suggestion, was based upon Jewish, Catholic and Protestant scholarship.

I was surprised to make Martin's personal acquaintance one day when he called me on the telephone in 1974, in hopes of obtaining copies of my research. As I then told him, I would be glad to give him copies of all that I had, if only he would meet me in public debate, in the Little Theatre, at the Salt Palace. As I then told him, it would not be necessary to debate whether or not President Young had taught that Adam was God — that would be acknowledged up front. What I wanted to debate was whether or not what President Young taught could be found in the Bible. Much to my surprise, Martin refused my challenge — in the past he had held many debates with unread naive Mormon Elders (i.e. young boys), but he was not interested in debate with someone who was informed, though he would be glad to receive any documentation which I would give him.

My interest and studies on the Biblical Doctrine on Deity continued for another 14 years, when I produced a paper entitled "New Light on Ancient Hebrew/Christian Doctrine on Deity". This paper was read orally at the 1988 Sunstone Symposium in Salt Lake City, where it was voted as the best paper of the year. Not long after this a friend contacted me in hopes that I would go with him and his wife on a trip to California. His wife's children had left Mormonism and joined Walter Martin's church in San Diego, and he wanted me to take up a labor in hopes of reclaiming them to the Restored Gospel. Through this trip a copy of the above mentioned work was finally placed in Walter Martin's hands. He read it and became so upset, that shortly afterwards he suffered a massive heart attack and died. Eight years later, after several more years of labor on the footnotes, the first half of this work was finally published under its original title: "New Light on the Ancient Hebrew/Christian Doctrine on Deity, Part 1".

All of this brings us to your purpose here in Utah. By and large your presence here and your selection of Salt Lake City as a meeting place for your conference, can only be viewed as a challenge to the Mormon religion. If the past is any indication of the future, and the video recently produced by your church would indicate that it is, it is only to be ex-

pected that among other things, you will be discussing the reasons why you cannot embrace the Mormon faith into the family of believers as a bona fide "Christian" Religion.

Any informed person knows that the Mormon religion does not square off with "traditional" Christian Theology. To be sure there are many areas of agreement, but there are also great differences. However, this confession does not go to say that Mormon doctrine would differ from the teachings of "Original" Christianity. Mormonism never did claim to be a product of traditional Christianity, but on the contrary it claimed to be the Restoration of "Original" Christianity by Divine Revelation from Heaven. This leaves us with a question about your religion and whether or not "traditional Christianity" agrees with "Original Christianity" as it is taught and set forth in the Bible.

It is no secret that Christianity has not stood still. Its doctrinal thinking has evolved and continued to change for 2000 years. The existence of thousands of different "Christian" sects testifies to this fact. Indeed, the "Protestant Reformation" itself is an open acknowledgement to the corruption of Original Christianity. In substance, the "Protestant Reformation" was a feeble attempt by uninspired men to reform the church in accordance with the original tenants of Christianity, from which it had strayed. In matters of morality, they made substantial improvements, but in matters of doctrine and theology, they continued to cling to the old corruptions, as they knew nothing else.

No informed historian, whether he be Mormon, Catholic, Protestant or Jew, or for that matter, even a Baptist — no informed Christian historian will deny that there have been many doctrinal changes and innovations which have crept into the Christian church. Even the Nicene Creed (which forms the basis for the "traditional" Christian doctrine on the Trinity) had its origins in a Council which occurred 325 years after the death of Christ. Indeed, even those who sat in the Council of Nicaea, acknowledged that the creed was not scriptural — its only justification, as they then thought, was that it was the better of two evils. The word "Trinity" does not occur even once in the Bible, and the reference to the Father, Son and Holy Ghost which is found in 1 John 5:7, is now known to be a corruption of the text which was added without authority by a certain Catholic copyist,

before the time of the King James translators. Consequently, it has been removed in nearly all the newer translations of the Bible. This is not to say that the Father, Son and Holy are not mentioned in the scriptures, but the definitions which are placed on them by the Nicene Creed and subsequent "Traditional Christianity", are not to be found in the Bible. Yet this notwithstanding, these are the very definitions upon which your Church pretends to deny Mormonism its rightful place in the true fold of Christianity.

Your Church has come to Utah as a mockery to the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints — you say that our religion is not according to the teachings of the Bible. The question which I would ask you is this: Do you have enough integrity to honestly look at the other side of the question, or are you just some narrow minded little bigot, who wants to mock another religion, without ever making any real effort to be informed, or learn what it is really all about?

What you hold in your hands is a small booklet that can easily be read in 2 or 3 hours in the evening while you wait for your next days conference — it is small, but no doubt, it is the most intense study of the Biblical Doctrine on Deity that you have ever seen. It was originally written as a footnote to the earlier mentioned work, but due to its size it became necessary to publish it under a separate title. It was not written in view of being presented to a Baptist audience, and there are a few pages which are not germane to the question at hand, but for the most part the topics discussed come right to the point of the objections which you have raised to the Mormon religion, then goes on to produce one proof text after another, to demonstrate that the Mormon religion is in perfect harmony with the "Original" teachings of Christianity and the Bible.

If you should be interested, I would be glad to hear from you. You may reach me at the following address:

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THE FATHER AND THE SON
THE TWO GODS OF
THE OLD TESTAMENT[1]

– 1 –

by
Fred C. Collier

Through the centuries there has been considerable debate among the different sects of "Christianity" with regard to who

[1]With only a few exceptions, such as the material on circumcision and Hebrews, this work is an academic effort based upon twenty six years of thought and study. For the most part, I have formulated my own ideas and opinions, nevertheless, I did benefit through Kenneth Shaw, who was kind enough to point out the significance of two passages in the Old Testament, the first in Exodus 23:20 – 23 and the second in Proverbs 30:4.

In the 70s I shared a large body of research on this topic with Boyd Kirkland, who came to my home for information. Later Kirkland wrote and published two papers on the subject (see "Jehovah as the Father The Development of the Mormon Jehovah Doctrine", published in *Sunstone Magazine* 9: <Autumn 1984> 33 – 44; see also "Eloheim and Jehovah in Mormonism and the Bible", published in *Dialogue* 19: <Spring 1986> 77 – 93). The present study goes beyond these earlier writings, by producing new information which demonstrates a harmony of thought in the scriptures, and resolves the controversy.

was Yahweh, God of the Old Testament, whether the Father or the Son. The same question has also been raised in LDS circles, and seemingly, the additional materials from *The Book of Mormon*, *Doctrine and Covenants* and *The Pearl of Great Price*, have only enlarged upon the problem. The whole question has a lot in common with the controversy which existed in scientific circles over the nature of light. For more than a century arguments were advanced as to whether light was a particle or a wave, with scientists filing off in one school of thought or the other. Each side of the controversy developed a battery of experiments to prove their own point of view. Of course, conviction to either side of the argument required that the experiments and findings of the opposing party be ignored. This was because no one suspected that light could be both — not, that is until the 1970s, when a test was developed which proved beyond a doubt that Light was both a Particle and a Wave.

Just so, it is in this argument concerning the Godhead. For centuries the question has been argued as to whether Yahweh, God of the Old Testament was God the Father or whether He was God the Son, and proof texts have been advanced by different religions to prove one side or the other. However, of late, evidence has been brought forth which would show that both God the Father and God the Son were Yahweh, for Christ took upon himself the name of his Father (just as mortals often do) and at times, he also appeared in the Old Testament as Yahweh.

For those who labor under the assumption that the Old Testament is strictly "a monotheistic book", or that there is only one God, the obvious truth of this work will be difficult to comprehend. We will therefore diverge for a moment and quote a few passages in order to place the doctrine of Scripture in its original context. There are in fact, at the very least, two Gods who figure prominently in the Old Testament — they are the Father and the Son, and both of these are referred to at various times as "God" and "Yahweh". The following passage serves as a good example:

Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: ***therefore God***, ***thy God***, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above ***thy fellows***.[2] (Psalms 45:6–7)

Here we have a scripture with two distinct Gods being spoken of in the same passage, and it is obvious from the context that these two Gods both constitute "God" to all Israel. Not only are there two Gods, but it is stated that one of them is subordinate to the other Higher God. In fact, the higher God is worshipped by the lesser God. This is a Messianic Psalm wherein Christ the Messiah is shown in a subservient role to God the Father, who in chapters 42 and 43 is referred to as "El" (Psalms 42:2, 8, 9; 43:4) and who in chapters 46 and 47 is designated as "Elyon" the "great King over all the earth" (Psalms 46:4; 47:2). The fact that the subordinate "God" is correctly identified as Christ is clearly stated in the New Testament where this same verse is quoted verbatim along with other proof texts, and interpreted as a reference to the Son of God (Hebrews 1:8–9).

For many it will be difficult to believe that the doctrine as here set forth can actually be found in the "Monotheistic Book" of the Old Testament, nevertheless, as we have and shall see, such is the case, not only in this passage, but in many others. The relationship between God the Father and God the Son is again referred to in another Psalm which was written by King David:

Yahweh said unto my Lord, *Sit thou* ***at my right hand***, until I make thine enemies thy footstool (Psalms 110:1)

In this passage, God the Father is designated as "Yahweh" and Christ the Messiah as "Lord" (translated from Hebrew "Adonai" which is to say "sovereign" or "Master") and again, just as in Psalms 45, Christ is shown in a subservient role to the Father, sitting at the favored position of His "right hand". That this is

[2]The reference to "thy fellows" speaks of the 70 sons of El, who are members of the Primordial Council and the brothers of Christ. For more on this see, Job 1:6–12; 2:1–7; Psa 82:1, 6; 86:6; 89:5–8.

the correct interpretation is directly stated in the New Testament, where Jesus cites this same passage in order to confound his enemies:

> While the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them, Saying, What think ye of Christ? whose son is he? They say unto him, The Son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, 'Yahweh [Psa 110:1; Luke 20:42] said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call[ed] him "Lord", how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions. (Matt. 22:41–46; Luke 20:41–43)

The question is this: How can David rightfully refer to the "Christ" as his "Lord", if in fact, "Christ" is actually David's son. In other words, if David is Christ's father, how can the Christ be David's "Lord", since according to the Patriarchal Order of things the father is always considered greater than his children.

Obviously these Pharisees did not fully comprehend the idea of the sonship of Christ. To be sure Jesus was born through the lineage of David on his mother's side, as well as that of his step-father Joseph — but as far as actual lineage in the flesh is concerned, Jesus was the direct Son of God the Father. This is stated in Luke[3] as also in the following passage from Psalms:

> I will declare the decree: Yahweh hath said unto me, Thou art my son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalms 2:7; see also Luke 1:30–35)

Here again, God the Father is designated as "Yahweh", while Christ the Messiah is set forth as the Son of Yahweh. In verse 4 of Psalms 110 it states:

> Yahweh hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou [i.e. Christ the Messiah] art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek. (Psalms 110:1)

In this passage, the name of God the Father is again given as "Yahweh" while Christ the Messiah is referred to as "a priest . . .

[3]See "New Light on the ancient Hebrew/Christian Doctrine on Deity", published in *Doctrine of the Priesthood* 8: <January 1991> No. 1, Part 1, pp. 63–64; see also Luke 1:31–35.

after the order of Melchizedek". Again, the fact that the latter is a reference to Christ is stated in certain terms in the New Testament:

> So also Christ glorified not himself to be made an high priest; but he [i.e. Yahweh] that said unto him, Thou art my Son, to day have I begotten thee. As he saith also in another place, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec (Hebrews 5:5–6)

The reference to Yahweh declaring Christ to be His Son comes from Psalms chapter 2. In keeping with this same pattern, *generally speaking,* the New Testament speaks of the Father as "Yahweh", God of the Old Testament, who spoke unto the fathers by the Prophets, but who in New Testament times, hath spoken to the people through His Son (Hebrews 1:1–2). The following are a few examples:

> Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for it is written, He ["Yahweh" (Psa 91:1–12)] shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. (Matt 4:5–6)

> Jesus saith unto them, did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone [i.e. Christ the Messiah] which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is Yahweh's doing [Psa 118:22–23], and it is marvellous in our eyes? (Matt 21:42)

> And there was delivered unto him [Jesus] the book of the prophet Isaiah. And when he had opened the book, he found the place where it was written, The Spirit of the Lord Yahweh is upon me; because Yahweh [Isa 61:1] hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, To preach the acceptable year of Yahweh [Isa 61:2]. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him. And he began to say unto them, This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears. (Luke 4:17–21)

Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; of whom ye say, that he is your God (John 8:54)

[the Father] ***God*** *[El], who at sundry times and in divers manners* ***spake in time past unto the fathers*** *by the prophets, Hath in these last days* ***spoken unto us by his Son,*** whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds (Hebrews 1:1–2)

The God of Abraham*, and* ***Isaac****, and of* ***Jacob****,* ***the God of our fathers****,* ***hath glorified his Son Jesus****;* whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. (Acts 3:13; see also 2:32–36; 3:20–24)

The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. (Acts 5:30)

The 22nd Psalm foretold many events which took place in the life of Christ, and in the process clearly establishes a distinction between Christ the Messiah and Yahweh:

My El, **my El**, why hast thou forsaken me? (Matt 27:46; Mark 15:34) why art thou so far from helping me . . . . I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people. All they that see me laugh me to scorn: they shoot out the lip, they shake the head, saying, *He trusted on* ***Yahweh*** *that he would deliver him: let him deliver him*, seeing he delighted in him. But thou art he that took me out of the womb: thou didst make me hope when I was upon my mother's breasts. I was cast upon thee from the womb: thou art **my El** from my mother's belly. Be not far from me; for trouble is near; for there is none to help. Many bulls have compassed me: strong bulls of Bashan have beset me round. They gaped upon me with their mouths, as a ravening and a roaring lion. *I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint: my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels. My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws; and thou hast brought me into the dust of death.* For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: ***they pierced my hands*** *and* ***my feet***. I may tell all my bones: they look and stare upon me. *They* ***part my garments*** *among them, and* ***cast lots upon my vesture***. But be not thou far from me, O **Yahweh**: O my strength, haste thee to help me.

Deliver my soul from the sword; my darling from the power of the dog. (Psalm 22:1–20)

The 69th Psalm is another scripture which clearly demonstrates the subordinate relationship of Christ the Messiah to Yahweh:

Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing: I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, *being mine enemies wrongfully,* are mighty: *then I restored that which I took not away*. O God, thou knowest my foolishness; and my sins are not hid from thee. Let not them that wait on thee, O **Yahweh** Lord of hosts, be ashamed for my sake: let not those that seek thee be confounded for my sake, ***O God of Israel***. *Because for thy sake I have borne reproach;* shame hath covered my face. I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children. For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me. When I wept, and chastened my soul with fasting, that was to my reproach. I made sackcloth also my garment; and I became a proverb to them. They that sit in the gate speak against me; and I was the song of the drunkards.

But as for me, *my prayer is unto thee, O **Yahweh**,* in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation. Deliver me out of the mire, and let me not sink: let me be delivered from them that hate me, and out of the deep waters. Let not the waterflood overflow me, neither let the deep swallow me up, and let not the pit shut her mouth upon me. *Hear me, O **Yahweh**;* for thy loving kindness is good: turn unto me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. And *hide not thy face from **thy servant**;* for I am in trouble: hear me speedily. Draw nigh unto my soul, and redeem it: deliver me because of mine enemies. Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour: mine adversaries are all before thee. Reproach hath broken my heart; and I am full of heaviness: and I looked for some to take pity, but there was none; and for comforters, but I found none. *They gave me also **gall** for my meat; and in my thirst they gave me **vinegar** to drink*. (Psalm 69:1–21)

Another Prophecy concerning the life and mission of the Messiah is found in the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, and just as with the others, it also establishes a clear distinction between Christ the suffering servant and his Father God Yahweh:

Who hath believed our report? and to whom is [Messiah] the Arm of Yahweh revealed? For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him. He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted. But ***he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities:*** the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and ***with his stripes we are healed***. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and ***Yahweh hath laid on him the iniquity of us all***. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: ***for the transgression of my people was he stricken***. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

Yet it pleased Yahweh to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: **when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin**, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of **Yahweh** shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall **my righteous servant** justify many; **for he shall bear their iniquities**. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul **unto death**: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. (Isaiah 53:1–12)

All these passages, and many others besides demonstrate that Yahweh is God the Father. There are in fact more than 200 pas-

sages of scripture which directly affirm that God the Father was actually Yahweh, the God of the Old Testament, while Christ the Messiah is designated variously as Yahweh's "Son", His "servant" and His "Prophet".[4] Yet all this notwithstanding, in Deuteronomy 32, Christ the Messiah is referred to as "Yahweh", one of the many sons of El, and heir to the Godship over all Israel:

> He is the Rock, his work is perfect,
> for all his ways are equitable.
> Trustworthy El who does no wrong,
> he is the honest, the Upright One!
> They have acted perversely,
> **those he fathered** without blemish,
> a deceitful and underhand brood.
> Is this the return you make to Yahweh?
> O people brainless and unwise!
> **Is this not your father**, who gave you being,
> who made you, by whom you subsist?
> Think back to primordial times:[5]
> consider the years of many generations.
> Question your father, let him explain to you,
> your elders, and let them tell you!
> *When Elyon gave the nations each their heritage,*

[4]For a listing of these see *Doctrine of the Priesthood* 5: <January 1988> 99–100, footnote c).

[5]*The New Jerusalem Bible* reads "Think back on the days of old, think over the years, down the ages" — the *King James Version* reads: "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations" — the *New American Standard Bible* reads: "Remember the days of old, Consider the years of all generations". The word "old" is translated from the Hebrew word "owlam" or "olam", which by definition is a synonym and alternate for the Hebrew word "qedem" or "qedmah". Today many scholars are coming to realize that at times both of these words are used in reference to the **Preexistence**, **Pre-earth** or **Primordial** times. Since the current thinking among Jews, Catholics and Protestants is not favorable to the doctrine of the Preexistence, the newer translations are reluctant to use it. Nevertheless, the following passages are a few of those wherein the word "primordial" or "Preexistence" would be appropriately placed in the English text of the Bible: Deut 32:7–8; 2 Kings 19:25; Isa 37:26; 46:9, 10; 51:9; Psa 93:2; Mic 5:2; Jude 4.

when he partitioned out the human race,
he assigned the boundaries of nations
according to the number of the children of El,
but Yahweh's portion was his people,
Jacob was to be the measure of his inheritance.
(*NJB*, *KJV*, Deut 32:4–9)

Again in contrast to this, Psalms 110 prophetically proclaims that the Christ would sit on the right hand of God the Father, as the birthright Son of "Yahweh". So then, Who is Yahweh — God the Father or God the Son? The Testimony in the scriptures seems to be divided on this important point, and for centuries this apparent contradiction has been the source of considerable dissension among the different sects of Christianity. Many scholars believe that the reason for this apparent contradiction is due to the late development of Biblical Monotheism, wherein, through an editing of the Biblical text, it was made to appear that the Father God El and His Son Yahweh were one and the same God. Still as we have already seen in Deuteronomy 32, there are a few passages which have survived the editing process that still proclaim Christ to be Yahweh son of El. For example, when John the Baptist was questioned by the Pharisees and asked who he was, he responded by referring to a Prophecy in Isaiah, which thereby identified the Messiah as "Yahweh":

Now this was John's testimony [i.e. the testimony of John the Baptist] when the Jews of Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to ask him who he was. He did not fail to confess, but confessed freely, "I am not the Christ". They asked him, "Then who are you? are you Elijah? (Malachi 4:5)

He said, "I am not."

"Are you the Prophet?" [i.e. the Prophet referred to in Deut 18:15]

He answered, "No."

Finally they said, "Who are you? Give us an answer to take back to those who sent us. What do you say about yourself?"

John replied in the words of Isaiah the prophet, "I am the voice of one calling in the desert, 'Make straight the way for the Lord.'"

Now some Pharisees who had been sent questioned him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ, nor Elijah, nor the Prophet?"

"I baptize with water," John replied, "but among you stands one you do not know. He is the one who comes after me, the thongs of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie." (*NIV* John 1:19–27; see also Luke 1:76; 2:11; Matt 3:1–3, 11)

As it is stated, when John finally told them who he was, he quoted from a passage in Isaiah which prophetically foretold the coming of the Messiah. What is interesting is that in this passage, the Messiah is referred to as "Yahweh . . . our God".

For those who read the King James Version, it is important to know that almost invariably, whenever the word "Yahweh" appears in the Hebrew text, in the KJV it is translated into English as "LORD" in all capital letters. This is in contrast to "Lord" when it is spelled with the last three letters in lower case. On these occasions the word "Lord" is usually translated from the Hebrew word "adonai" which means "Master" or "Sovereign". Bearing this in mind consider the following:

The voice of him that crieth in the wilderness, *Prepare ye the way of* ***Yahweh****,* make straight in the desert a highway *for our* ***God****.* (Isaiah 40:3)

We see in this passage a perfect correlation to Deuteronomy 32 where Christ the Messiah is designated "Yahweh" the son of "El". Another similar passage is found in the Gospel of John where Jesus suggests that he was the "Angel of the LORD" — the Great "I AM", that appeared to Moses in the Burning Bush. Paul also makes a similar statement in Corinthians, where he states that Christ was the Angel that followed Israel through the sea. All these passages relate to the 23rd Chapter of Exodus where this special "Angel" is formally introduced to Israel by the Father God Yahweh. Consider the following:

Behold, ***I send an Angel before thee***, *to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared*. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: ***for my name is in him***. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. ***For mine Angel shall go before thee***, and bring thee [to the Promised land]. (Exodus 23:20–23)

From this we gather that Yahweh, God of all Israel is sending a special "Angel" to accompany the Children of Israel during their journey to the promised land. Yahweh gives explicit instructions that the Children of Israel are to render complete obedience to this "Angel", the reason being that Yahweh's "name is in him". What is important to our subject here is that the text clearly states that Yahweh's name would be in this angel. In other words, the Angel's name would be "Yahweh". That this is the correct understanding of this passage is manifest throughout the Old Testament. Over and over again this "Angel" continues to appear, and when He does, He is consistently referred to by two alternate names — "Yahweh" and "the Angel of Yahweh".[6] His

[6]Regarding this "Angel of Yahweh", the *New Catholic Encyclopedia* states the following:

"ANGEL OF THE LORD

"A theophanic messenger of God, mentioned mainly in ancient texts of the Pentateuch and the Historical Books of the Old Testament, distinct from, and posing a different problem, than, the angels in general.

"Summary of Usage. The Hebrew word Mal'ak (messenger) may be used of human messengers (Gen 32:4), prophets as spokesmen for God (2 Chr 36:15–16; Ag 1:13), or God's superhuman envoys (Gen 19:1, 15), but its use in the phrase *mal'ak yahweh* or *'elohim* (the messenger of Yahweh or God) has a more specific meaning *that has not yet been* ***satisfactorily explained***.

"In a series of passages taken from the Yahwistic and Elohistic traditions that formed the nucleus of the Pentateuch and in other early texts, the messenger of the Lord is presented not as a created heavenly envoy, distinct from God, but as Yahweh or God Himself appearing to men in sensible form (Gen 16:7–13; 21:17–20; 22:11–18; 31:11–13; Ex 3:2–6; 14:19, 24–25; Nm 22:22–35; Jgs 2:1–5; see also Jos 5:13–15; Jgs 6:11–24; 13:3–23). In a few other passages (Ex 23:20–23; Gen 24:7; 48:16; Nm 20:16) a messenger sent by God and apparenly

distinct from Him performs salvation acts that are attributed directly to God in other places. Other passages ascribe vengeance to messengers from God, who are distinct from Him, e.g., the Exterminator of Ex 12:23 (see also 1 Cor 10:10; Heb 11:28; Gen 19:1; 2 Sm 24:16; 4 Kgs 19:35). Finally, David is compared to an angel of the Lord because of his goodness and wisdom (1 Sm 29:9; 2 Sm 14:17–20; 19:27). The burden of the rest of this article is to determine what the angel of the Lord in the first series of texts means.

"**Original Meaning of Yahweh's Messenger.** There are three theories that attempt to explain the origin and meaning of these texts: (1) the messenger is one who represents the Lord, transmits His will and promises, and therefore speaks God's message in the first person singular as the Prophets also did (Jerome and Augustine); (2) the messenger is the ubiquitous God Himself who directly but in human form manifests His message to His chosen leaders (see the Greek and early Latin Fathers of the Church who affirmed that the angel was a manifestation of the Logos [i.e. Christ]); and (3) the messenger is the result of later theological speculations and was interpolated into ancient, naive traditions relating direct, nomediated appearances of God to man that clashed with the evolved concept of God's transcendence and the angels' mediation.

"Each theory has valid elements that aid in the understanding of the individual passages, but none of them solves all the problems concerned with the messenger of the Lord wherever it appears. The third theory mentioned above (interpolation) cannot by itself explain why vestiges of the direct intervention of God where left uninterpolated. But it does explain how postexilic Jews must have understood the passages into which they did not interpolate the angel of the Lord. The first theory mentioned above (representation) is certainly Biblical and is to be applied to the second and third series of texts cited above, and perhaps even to the fourth where David is praised as God's representative; but in the first series the messenger is certainly not distinct from God Himself.

"The second theory mentioned above (identify) appears to offer more solutions than the other two, especially when one considers that the original meaning of *mal'ak* may not have been messenger but a sending of a message. Certainly in other ancient passages no mediation whatsoever is found when God communicates with His elect (Gen 12:1–3, *passim*). "*The angel of the Lord is therefore* ***a form in which Yahweh appears*** *. . . .* ***He is God himself in human form***" [G. Von rad, *Genesis*, tr. J. H. Marks (Philadelphia 1961) 188]. God appearing in human form then is a type of the Logos, Christ, who fulfills the directness and mediation of this mysterious "message" of Yahweh. In Mal 3:1 the messenger of the Lord and messenger of the covenant appear to be both Yahweh Himself and the messenger sent before Him.

"In the New Testament (Lk 1:11; 2:9; Jn 5:4; Acts 5:19; etc.) the angel of the Lord is distinct from God, "sent from God" (lk 1:26)." *New Catholic Encyclopedia* Volume 1:501)

The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible states:

*"**The angel of Yahweh.*** The notion that Yahweh is surrounded by a council of heavenly beings who do his bidding is found throughout the Old Testament.

first appearance is found in the 16th chapter of Genesis, where He appears to Hagar in her flight to escape the wrath of Sarah her master (Gen 16:7–13). After four references to this angelic being as "the angel of Yahweh" (see verses 7, 9, 10, 11), finally in verse 13 it is revealed that the "angel" which spake unto her is actually "Yahweh" himself. This same "angel" is again mentioned in chapter 21, verse 17 and 19, where He is spoken of alternately as "God" and "the angel of God". The next appearance of "the angel of Yahweh" occurs in chapter 22, where again he is identified as "God":

> And it came to pass after these things, that God did tempt Abraham, and said unto him, Abraham: and he said, Behold, here I am. And he said, Take now thy son, *thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest*, and get thee into the land of Moriah; and offer him there for a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.
>
> And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and clave the wood for the burnt offering, and rose up, and went unto the place of which God had told him. Then on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw the place afar off. And Abraham said unto his young men, Abide ye here with the ass; and I and the lad will go yonder and worship, and come again to you. And Abraham took the wood of the burnt offering, and laid it upon Isaac his son; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife; and they went both of them together. And Isaac spake unto Abraham his father, and said, My father: and he said, Here am I,

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In the late Old Testament period this view developed into an elaborate angelology. In the early tradition, however, the expression . . . "messenger" did not necessarily mean a heavenly intermediary between God and man, for Israel's faith found expression in the conviction that Yahweh himself was actively present in the world. *Of particular interest are a number of passages* ***which identify the messenger with Yahweh himself****. The narrator speaks alternately of the angel and of Yahweh* (Gen. 21:17; 22:11, 15–16; 31:11–13; Exod. 3:2–5; Judge. 6:11–24; etc.), and in one instance affirms that Yahweh's name or very self is in the guiding angel (Exod. 23:20–21). In these cases the angel is the form of Yahweh's appearance in a specific situation. He appears in human guise, but not in a genuine incarnation. In this way the tradition attempts to express both Yahweh's heavenly lordship and his personal presence in the world." (*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* 2:422)

my son. And he said, Behold the fire and the wood: but where is the lamb for a burnt offering? And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering: so they went both of them together. And they came to the place which God had told him of; and Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar upon the wood. And Abraham stretched forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his son. And ***the angel of Yahweh*** called unto him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham: and he said, Here am I. And he said, Lay not thine hand upon the lad, neither do thou any thing unto him: *for now I know that thou f**earest God**, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son **from me***. And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns: and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place Yahweh provides: as it is said to this day, In the mount of Yahweh it shall be seen.

And ***the angel of Yahweh*** called unto Abraham out of heaven the second time, and said, By myself have I sworn, ***saith Yahweh***, for because thou hast done this thing, and *hast not withheld **thy son**, **thine only son**: That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply **thy seed** as the stars of the heaven,* and as the sand which is upon the sea shore; and thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies; and *in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;* because thou hast obeyed my voice. (Gen 22:1–18)

In this chapter, we have Christ the Messiah, appearing as "the Angel of Yahweh", and Abraham is commanded to offer up his only son Isaac, even as the Angel of Yahweh would himself be offered up as Christ the Messiah nearly 2000 years later. This parallel between the Father God "El" and Christ the Messiah and Abraham and Isaac is interesting. Christ the Messiah was the sacrificial Son, the birthright heir and "only begotten Son" who was beloved of the Father. And so also in the case of Abraham and Isaac — Abraham stands in his probationary state, in preparation to becoming the Father God on some future creation and Isaac is to be his sacrificial son, even: "thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest". So on this earth, Christ the Messiah was to El,

what Isaac would be to Abraham on a future creation. The whole idea of the sacrificial Son is beautifully expressed in John:

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. (John 3:16)

In Genesis chapter 24, this same "angel of Yahweh", which appeared to Abraham at the offering of Isaac, is again referred to. In this case the Father God El is designated as "Yahweh God of heaven" while Christ the Messiah is referred to as "his angel":

Yahweh God of heaven, which took me from my father's house, and from the land of my kindred, a*nd which spake unto me, and that sware unto me, saying, Unto thy seed will I give this land;* ***he shall send his angel before thee***, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence. (Gen 24:7; see also verse 40)

The similarities between this passage and Exodus 23 are obvious — in both cases, the Father God sends Christ the Messiah, even His "angel" or "messenger", to accompany those who are not worthy of His presence. This same idea is set forth on numerous occasions in Exodus and Numbers:

And Moses returned unto Yahweh, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin; and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written. And Yahweh said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book. There now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: behold, ***mine Angel*** *shall go before thee:* nevertheless in the day when I visit I will visit their sin upon them. (Exodus 32:31–34)

And **Yahweh** said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: And *I will send an* ***angel*** *before thee;* and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite, and the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite: Unto a land flowing with milk and honey:

for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiffnecked people: lest I consume thee in the way. (Exodus 33:1–3)

And when we cried unto ***Yahweh***, he heard our voice, and sent an ***angel***, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt (Numbers 20:16)

This same "angel" which accompanied Israel to the Promised Land, is again mentioned in Numbers chapter 22, where He speaks through an ass to confound Balaam (Numbers 22:22–35). In the book of Judges, the "angel of Yahweh" appears four more times, first in chapter 2, where he speaks of the fact that he had led them to the promised land and the commandments which he had given them that they did not keep, and then in chapters 5, 6 and 13, where he curses Meroz, and appears to Gideon and the parents of Samson. You will notice that in these last two citations this "angel of Yahweh" is clearly identified as "Yahweh" himself:

And the **angel of Yahweh** came up from Gilgal to Bochim, and said, I made you to go up out of Egypt, and have brought you unto the land which I sware unto your fathers; and I said, I will never break my covenant with you. And ye shall make no league with the inhabitants of this land; ye shall throw down their altars: but ye have not obeyed my voice: why have ye done this? Wherefore I also said, I will not drive them out from before you; but they shall be as thorns in your sides, and their gods shall be a snare unto you. And it came to pass, when the **angel of Yahweh** spake these words unto all the children of Israel, that the people lifted up their voice, and wept. And they called the name of that place Bochim: and they sacrificed there unto **Yahweh**. (Judges 2:1–5)

Curse ye Meroz, said the **angel of Yahweh**, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of Yahweh, to the help of Yahweh against the mighty. (Judges 5:23)

And there came an ***angel of Yahweh***, and sat under an oak which was in Ophrah, that pertained unto Joash the Abiezrite: and his son Gideon threshed wheat by the winepress, to hide it from the Midianites. And the ***angel of Yahweh*** appeared unto him, and said unto him, Yahweh is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if Yahweh be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not Yahweh

bring us up from Egypt? but now Yahweh hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. *And **Yahweh** looked upon him, and said,* Go in this thy might, and thou shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee? And he said unto him, Oh my Lord, wherewith shall I save Israel? behold, my family is poor in Manasseh, and I am the least in my father's house. *And **Yahweh** said unto him,* Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man. And he said unto him, If now I have found grace in thy sight, then shew me a sign that thou talkest with me. Depart not hence, I pray thee, until I come unto thee, and bring forth my present, and set it before thee. And he said, I will tarry until thou come again.

And Gideon went in, and made ready a kid, and unleavened cakes of an ephah of flour: the flesh he put in a basket, and he put the broth in a pit, and brought it out unto him under the oak, and presented it. And *the **angel of God** said unto him,* Take the flesh and the unleavened cakes, and lay them upon this rock, and pour out the broth. And he did so.

Then the ***angel of Yahweh*** put forth the end of the staff that was in his hand, and touched the flesh and the unleavened cakes; and there rose up fire out of the rock, and consumed the flesh and the unleavened cakes. Then *the **angel of Yahweh** departed out of his sight*. And when Gideon perceived that he was an **angel of Yahweh**, Gideon said, Alas, **O Lord Yahweh**! for because I have seen *an **angel of Yahweh** face to face*. *And **Yahwe**h said unto him,* Peace be unto thee; fear not: *thou shalt not die*. Then Gideon built an altar there *unto **Yahweh***, and called it Yahweh-Peace: unto this day it is yet in Ophrah of the Abiezrites. (Judges 6:11–24)

And there was a certain man of Zorah, of the family of the **Danites**, whose name was Manoah; and his wife was barren, and bare not. And *the **angel of Yahweh** appeared unto the woman,* and said unto her, Behold now, thou art barren, and bearest not: but thou shalt conceive, and bear a son. Now therefore beware, I pray thee, and drink not wine nor strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing: For, lo, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and no rasor shall come on his head: for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from the womb: and he shall begin to deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines.

Then the woman came and told her husband, saying, A man of God came unto me, and his countenance was like the countenance of ***an angel of God***, very terrible: but I asked him not whence he was, neither

told he me his name: But he said unto me, Behold, thou shalt conceive, and bear a son; and now drink no wine nor strong drink, neither eat any unclean thing: for the child shall be a Nazarite to God from the womb to the day of his death.

Then Manoah intreated Yahweh, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God which thou didst send come again unto us, and teach us what we shall do unto the child that shall be born. And God hearkened to the voice of Manoah; and *the **angel of God** came again unto the woman* as she sat in the field: but Manoah her husband was not with her. And the woman made haste, and ran, and shewed her husband, and said unto him, Behold, the man hath appeared unto me, that came unto me the other day. And Manoah arose, and went after his wife, and came to the man, and said unto him, Art thou the man that spakest unto the woman? And he said, I am. And Manoah said, Now let thy words come to pass. How shall we order the child, and how shall we do unto him? And *the **angel of Yahweh*** said unto Manoah, Of all that I said unto the woman let her beware. She may not eat of any thing that cometh of the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing: all that I commanded her let her observe.

And Manoah said unto *the **angel of Yahweh**,* I pray thee, let us detain thee, until we shall have made ready a kid for thee. And *the **angel of Yahweh*** said unto Manoah, Though thou detain me, ***I will not eat*** of thy bread: and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, *thou must offer it unto **Yahweh**. For Manoah knew not that he was **an angel of Yahweh**. And Manoah said unto the **angel of Yahweh**, What is thy name,* that when thy sayings come to pass we may do thee honour? And *the **angel of Yahweh*** said unto him, *Why askest thou thus after my name,* seeing it is secret? So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and *offered it upon a rock unto Yahweh:* and *the **angel** did wondrously;* and Manoah and his wife looked on. For it came to pass, when the flame went up toward heaven from off the altar, that *the **angel of Yahweh*** ascended in the flame of the altar. And Manoah and his wife looked on it, and fell on their faces to the ground. But *the **angel of Yahweh*** did no more appear to Manoah and to his wife. Then Manoah knew that he was ***an angel of Yahweh***. And Manoah said unto his wife, *We shall surely die, **because we have seen God**.* But his wife said unto him, *If **Yahweh** were pleased to kill us, he would not have received a burnt offering* and a meat offering at our hands, neither would he have shewed us all these things, nor would as at this time have told us such things as these. (Judges 13:3–23)

Both of these accounts make it clear that "the angel of Yahweh" was in fact "Yahweh" and in doing so, they make certain the intended interpretation of the passage in Exodus 23:

> Behold, **I send an Angel before thee**, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice . . . . **for my name is in him**. (Exodus 23:20–23)

As the many passages on the "angel of Yahweh" all point out, the angel's name was "Yahweh" and it is in this manner that the Father's name is in Him. In other words, the Father has bequeathed His name "Yahweh" to His angel. The third chapter of Exodus is one of the best examples of this. In this passage the "Angel of Yahweh" appears as "Yahweh" in the burning bush and when Moses asks to know His name, the angel of "Yahweh" responds by saying "I AM THAT I AM":

> Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. And ***the angel of Yahweh*** *appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush:* and he looked, and behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed. And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt. And *when* ***Yahweh*** *saw that he turned aside to see,* ***God*** *called unto him out of the midst of the bush,* and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I. And he said, Draw not nigh hither: *put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground*. Moreover he said, *I am* ***the God of thy father*** [i.e. God the Son of thy father]*, the God of* ***Abraham****, the God of* ***Isaac****, and the God of* ***Jacob***. And Moses hid his face; for ***he was afraid to look upon God***.
>
> And ***Yahweh*** said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters; for I know their sorrows; And I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land . . . flowing with milk and honey . . . . . Come now therefore, and I will send thee unto Pharaoh, that thou mayest bring forth my people the children of Israel out of Egypt.

And Moses said *unto* ***God,*** Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, *The God of your fathers* hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, **What is his name**? what shall I say unto them? *And God said* unto Moses, **I AM THAT I AM**: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, ***I AM*** *hath sent me unto you*. And ***God*** *said* moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, ***Yahweh God of your fathers****, [i.e. God the Son or the messiah, God of your fathers] the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob,* hath sent me unto you: ***this is my name for ever****,* and this is my memorial unto all generations. Go, and gather the elders of Israel together, and say unto them, **Yahweh God of your fathers**, *the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob,* appeared unto me, saying, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt (Exodus 3:13–16; see also Acts 7:30)

In this passage, the "angel of Yahweh", declared Himself to be the Great "I AM", even "Yahweh" the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob. This is especially significant when compared to another similar passage in John where Christ the Messiah declares Himself to be this very God, even the Great "I Am":

Jesus answered, If I honour myself, my honour is nothing: it is my Father that honoureth me; ***of whom ye say, that he is your God*** . . . . *Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad* [i.e. at the sacrifice of Isaac]. Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, *Before Abraham was,* ***I am****. Then took they up stones to cast at him*: but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple (John 8:54–59)

Obviously, the suggestion here is that Jesus was claiming to be "Yahweh", the great "I AM" and that this was how the Jews understood him is manifest by their reaction when they took up rocks to stone him for blasphemy: "for a good work stone ye we not, but because that thou, being a man, makest thyself God" (John 10:33). This being the case, we may take this to be a direct affirmation from Christ the Messiah that He was "Yahweh" even

the "Angel of Yahweh" that appeared to Moses in the burning bush, and not only so, but that very same "Angel" in whose person the Father's name "Yahweh" dwelt (Acts 7:30–36; Exodus 23:20–23).

Another affirmation that this "Angel" is correctly identified as Christ the Messiah is found in the book of Corinthians, where Paul teaches that Christ was the Angel that led the Children of Israel through the sea:

> Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under *the cloud,* and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in *the cloud* and in the sea; And did all eat the same spiritual meat; And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that *spiritual Rock that followed them:* ***and that Rock was Christ*** (1 Corinthians 10:1–4)

In the above passage, Paul makes reference to "Our fathers [who] were under the cloud" — he speaks of all Israel passing "through the sea" — then he speaks of "that spiritual Rock that followed them" — and then finally he affirms that "***that Rock was Christ***". The reference to Christ as the "Rock" hearkens back to the Old Testament practice wherein the God of Israel is referred to as "the Rock of our Salvation" and etc. (Deut 32:4, 15, 18, 31, 37; 1 Sam 2:2; 2 Sam 22:2, 3, 47; 23:3; Psalm 18:2, 31, 46; 28:1; 31:2, 3; 42:9; 62:2, 6, 7; 71:3; 78:35; 89:26; 92:15; 94:22; 95:1; Isa 17:10; 51:1; Matt 16:18). Obviously, Paul is here equating "the Angel of God" which "followed them" (i.e. Israel) through the Sea, with Christ the Messiah, whom he refers to as the "Rock" of "Christ". Consider the following:

> And **the angel of God**, *which went before the camp of Israel, removed and* ***went behind them****; and the pillar of the* ***cloud*** *went from before their face, and stood* ***behind them****:* And it came between the camp of the Egyptians and the camp of Israel; and *it was a* ***cloud*** *and darkness* to them, but it gave light by night to these: so that the one came not near the other all the night. And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and ***Yahweh*** *caused the sea to go back* by a strong east

wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left.

And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And it came to pass, that in the morning watch **Yahweh** looked unto the host of the Egyptians ***through the pillar of fire*** *and of the* ***cloud,*** and troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel; for ***Yahweh*** *fighteth for them* against the Egyptians.

And ***Yahweh*** *said unto Moses,* Stretch out thine hand over the sea, that the waters may come again upon the Egyptians, upon their chariots, and upon their horsemen. And Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and ***Yahweh*** *overthrew the Egyptians* in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them. But the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea; and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left. Thus ***Yahweh*** *saved Israel that day* out of the hand of the Egyptians; and Israel saw the Egyptians dead upon the sea shore. And Israel saw that great work *which* ***Yahweh*** *did* upon the Egyptians: and the people feared **Yahweh**, and believed **Yahweh**, and his servant Moses. (Exodus 14:19–31)

The parallels between this passage and Corinthians make it self evident that Paul equated the "Angel of God" with "Christ" the Messiah — and not only Paul, but the book of Deuteronomy also. Indeed, the following chapter contains the Song of Moses, which was written to celebrate the event described above, and in this song the "angel of God" is identified as the "right hand" of Yahweh (Exodus 15:6) which is a term used in both the Old and New Testament to designate Christ the Messiah (Exodus 15:6, 12; Deut 33:2; Psa 20:6; 21:8; 44:2–3; 48:10; 60:5; 63:8; 74:11; 77:10; 80:15, 17; 89:13; 89:10, 13, 18–26; 98:1; 108:6; **110:1**,

4–5 **118**:**15–16**; 137:5; 138:7;139:10; Isaiah 41:10; 62:8; 63:12; Lam 2:3; Matt 22:44; Mark 12:36; 14:62; 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:32–36; 5:30–31; 7:55–56; Rom 8:34; Eph 1:20; Col 3:1; Heb 1:3, 13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 Peter 3:22). It is also clear that references to "the angel of Yahweh", "the angel of God", and Yahweh's "angel", as they have been cited in passages above, are, in accordance with the New Testament writers, to be identified with Christ the Messiah, the Son of God/Son of Man/Son of El Elyon. All this helps us to understand why God the Son and His mission, was known and understood by the Old Testament Prophets. Indeed, it now becomes clear that Jesus Christ Himself has been personally present and actively involved in the life and history of ancient Israel, going back at least as far as the time of Abraham, just as he declared in the Gospel of John — as he then said "Abraham saw my day and rejoiced". In other words, in his preearth existence, Jesus visited the Prophets and endeavored to redeem His people. This is what is suggested by the words of Jesus in the 23rd Chapter of Matthew:

> O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, *how often would I have gathered thy children together*, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate. For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh *in the name of the Lord*. (Matt. 23:37; Luke 13:34–35)

Some of the passages which we have thus far perused directly state that Christ the Messiah is "Yahweh" God of the Old Testament, while others such as the above only suggest His presence in Old Testament times, pointing as they do to Christ's involvement with ancient Israel before his mortal sojourn on Earth. That Christ is identified as "the Angel of Yahweh", "the Angel of God", and Yahweh's "Angel", is also significant in view of the fact that in the Hebrew dialect, the word "Angel" does not necessarily mean a heavenly being. Actually the English word "angel" is translated from the Hebrew word "malak", which

means "Messenger". Strong's Hebrew Chaldee Dictionary states that "Malak" is "from an unused root meaning to despatch as a deputy; a messenger; specifically of God, i.e. an angel (also a prophet, priest or teacher): — ambassador, angel, king, messenger." (*Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible*, Hebrew and Chaldee Dictionary, page 66, number 4397). *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* states that: "In the Old Testament . . . the usual Hebrew word for "angel" . . . means simply "messenger, or envoy":

> In the patriarchal and monarchic narratives the principal functions of such messengers are: (a) to convey the mandates of God to men .-.-.-.-.-. It was an angel who ordered Abraham to refrain, at the last moment, from sacrificing his only son, Isaac (Gen 22:11) . . . . who indicated to Moses the special character of the burning bush (Exod 3:2). An angel harbingered the birth of Ishmael (Gen 16:11) and of Samson (Judg 13:3–5). An angel . . . escorted the Israelites through the wilderness (Exod 23:20–23; 33:2); put a cloud between them and the Egyptians at the Red Sea (Exod 14:19) (*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* 1:129)

The significance of all this is found in the fact that in His pre-earth life, as also during His mortal ministry, Christ the Messiah filled the role of "messenger" of the Father. In Malachi, he is even referred to as "the messenger of the covenant":

> Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even *the* ***messenger*** *of the* ***covenant***, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith Yahweh of hosts. But who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth? (Malachi 3:1–2)

The word "messenger" in the above passage is translated from the Hebrew word "Malak" just as is the word "angel" in other Old Testament passages which have already been cited. The fact that Christ came as the Father's messenger at His mortal advent on Earth is witnessed by Jesus himself, over and over again throughout his ministry. Consider for example the following:

Then answered Jesus and said unto them. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do: for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise. For the Father loveth the Son, and sheweth him all things that himself doeth . . . . . I can of mine own self do nothing: as I hear, I judge: and my judgment is just; *because I seek not mine own will, but* ***the will of the Father which hath sent me***. (John 5:19–20, 30)

Jesus answered them, and said, *My doctrine is not mine,* ***but his that sent me***. If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself. (John 7:16–17)

Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but ***as my Father hath taught me****, I speak these things*. And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him. (John 8:28–29)

He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself; but *the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment,* ***what I should say,*** and ***what I should speak***. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: *whatsoever I speak therefore,* ***even as the Father said unto me, so I speak***. (John 12:48–50)

And Yahweh said unto me, They have well spoken that which they have spoken. I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, *and* ***will put my words in his mouth****; and he shall speak unto them* ***all that I shall command him***. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken ***unto my words which he shall speak in my name,*** I will require it of him. (Deut 18:17–19)

Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me? *the words that I speak unto you I* ***speak not of myself:*** but the Father that dwelleth in me, ***he doeth the works***. (John 14:10)

He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings: and *the word which ye hear is not mine,* ***but the Father's which sent me***. (John 14:24)

And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, ***whom thou hast sent.*** I have glorified thee on the earth: *I*

have finished the work ***which thou gavest me to do***. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self *with the glory which I had with thee* ***before the world was***. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept *thy word*. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. *For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me;* and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed *that thou didst send me* [as thy messenger]. (John 17:3–8)

All these passages go to show, that Christ the Messiah came to do the will of His Father — to deliver his Father's "Message" — to teach his father's doctrine and to do his Father's "errand". This is true, not only of his mortal ministry as recorded in the New Testament, but also of his premortal-earth ministry which is recorded in the Old Testament. In both the Old and New Testament, Christ the Messiah was the "Messenger of the Covenant" who came to do his Father's "will" — he was the "Messenger" of the Father — even the "Angel of Yahweh" who took upon him his Father's name! It is for this reason that the Gospel of John designates Christ as the "Word", as it was Christ the Messiah, the "Right Arm of Yahweh" who consistently delivered the Father's message to His children. Consider the following:

In the beginning was the Word [or the Messenger of the Covenant or Angel of Yahweh], and the Word was with God [the Father], and the Word was God [even God the Son]. The same was in the beginning with God [the Father]. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God [the Father], whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe. He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. He was in the world, and the world was

made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become *the sons of God*, even to them that believe on his name: Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word [or "Messenger of the Covenant"] was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. (John 1:1–15; see also 1 John 1:1–3, 5; Rev 19:13)

The "Word" is indeed an appropriate designation for the "Messenger of the Covenant" who has from time immemorial delivered the Father's "Word" and "Message" to His children — and not only the "Word" but the very "Word" of the Father's "power" "by whom also He made the worlds" (Heb 1:2–3).

For centuries interdenominational contention has existed over the question of who was "Yahweh", God of the Old Testament, whether the Father or the Son. As we have seen, both have used the name, yet still the question arises: "Why the confusion?" Could it be that originally "Yahweh" was a title belonging to the Father and that just as is the case with mortals, He passed His name down to His birthright Son? Surely this was a common practice in Israel — for a father to bequeath his name to his son. There is one passage of scripture which suggests that this is the answer to the question — indeed, it makes it clear that the name "Yahweh" rightfully belongs to both the Father and the Son. Consider the following:

Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? *who hath established all the ends of the earth? **what is his name**, and **what is his son's name**,* If thou canst tell? (Proverbs 30:4, KJV)

The *New International Version* reads:

> Who has gone up to heaven and come down?
> Who has gathered up the wind in the hollow of his hands?
> who has wrapped up the waters in his cloak?

> Who has established all the ends of the earth?
> ***What is his name****, and* ***the name of his son****?*
> *Tell me if you know!* (*NIV*, Proverbs 30:4)

The New Jerusalem Bible reads:

> Who has mounted to the heavens, then come down again?
> Who has gathered the wind in the clasp of his hand?
> who has wrapped the waters in his cloak?
> Who has set all the ends of the earth firm?
> ***What is his name****:*
> ***what is his child's name****?*
> Do you know? (*NJB*, Proverbs 30:4)

The *Revised Standard Version* reads:

> Who has ascended to heaven and come down?
> Who has gathered the wind in his fists?
> Who has wrapped up the waters in a garment?
> *Who has established all the ends of the earth?*
> ***What is his name****, and* ***what is his son's name?***
> *Surely you know!* (*RSV*, Proverbs 30:4)

The New American Standard Bible reads:

> Who has ascended into heaven and descended?
> Who has gathered the wind in His fists?
> Who has wrapped the waters in His garment?
> ***What is His name or His son's name?***
> *Surely you know!* (*NABS*, Proverbs 30:4)

No doubt, in Ancient Israel it was common knowledge and they did "know" that God the Father and God the Son were both named "Yahweh", however, due to the late development of Biblical Monotheism, this knowledge was not passed down. Nevertheless, as we have seen, numerous passages remain in the Bible which still teach the doctrine. Another example of this is found in the Gospels where it is taught that Jesus came in the name of his Father:

I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive. (John 5:43)

Essentially this same idea is conveyed in the following passages, with the difference that in this case his Father's name is rendered in English as "the Lord", from the Hebrew "Yahweh". For the sake of clarity, I have rendered it in accordance with the original Hebrew:

And the multitudes that went before, and that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna to the Son of David: *Blessed is he that cometh* ***in the name of Yahweh***; Hosanna in the highest. (Matt 21:9)

For I say unto you, Ye shall not see me henceforth, till ye shall say, *Blessed is he that cometh* ***in the name of Yahweh*** (Matt 23:39; Luke 13:35)

And they that went before, and they that followed, cried, saying, Hosanna; *Blessed is he that cometh* ***in the name of Yahweh****:* Blessed be the kingdom of our father David, that cometh ***in the name of Yahweh****:* Hosanna in the highest. (Mark 11:9–10)

And when he was come nigh, even now at the descent of the mount of Olives, the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works that they had seen; Saying, Blessed be the King that cometh ***in the name of Yahweh*** peace in heaven, and glory in the highest. (Luke 19:37–38)

On the next day much people that were come to the feast, when they heard that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem, Took branches of palm trees, and went forth to meet him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is *the King of Israel* that cometh ***in the name of Yahweh*** (John 12:12–13)

This whole occasion is prophetically foretold in the Old Testament — in fact for the most part, the passage in question is taken verbatim from a Messianic Psalm, which removes all doubt as to the meaning of the passage, that in fact Jesus actually came in the name of "Yahweh" his Father. Since much of this chapter prophetically speaks of the coming Messiah, more than the passage under discussion is cited:

Yahweh is my strength and my song;
he has become my salvation. [This is the precise
definition for the actual Hebrew name
for Jesus; see also Exodus 15:2]

Hark, glad songs of victory in the tents of the righteous:
"The right hand of Yahweh [i.e. the Messiah] does valiantly,
the right hand of Yahweh [i.e. the Messiah] is exalted,
the right hand of Yahweh [i.e. the Messiah] does valiantly!"
I shall not die, but I shall live [in the resurrection],
and recount the deeds of Yahweh.
Yahweh has chastened me [the Messiah] sorely,
but he has not given me over to death.

Open to me the gates of righteousness
[Christ the Messiah is the gate: John 10:1–9],
that I may enter through them
and give thanks to Yahweh.

This [the Messiah] is the gate of Yahweh;
the righteous shall enter through it.

I thank thee that thou hast answered me
and [thou Messiah] hast become my salvation.
The stone which the builders rejected
[i.e. Christ the Messiah: Matt 21:42; Mark 12:10;
Luke 20:17; Acts 4:11; 1 Peter 2:6–8)]
has become the head of the corner.
This is Yahweh's doing;
it is marvelous in our eyes.
This is the day which Yahweh has made;
let us rejoice and be glad in it.
Save us, we beseech thee, O Yahweh!
O Yahweh, we beseech thee, give us success!

Blessed be he** [i.e. Christ the Messiah] **that cometh in the name of Yahweh

We bless you from the house of Yahweh
Yahweh is El,
and he has given us light.
Bind the festal procession with branches,

up to the horns of the altar!
Thou art El, and I will give thanks to thee;
thou art my God, I will extol thee,

O give thanks to Yahweh, for he is good;
for his steadfast love endures for ever!
(RSV, KJV, Psalm 118:14–29)

As we have seen, over and over again the Gospels affirm that Christ the Messiah came in the name of Yahweh his Father. By this we may know that Yahweh was Christ's actual name, just as it was the name of the Old Testament "angel" in whose person the Father God Yahweh's name dwelt. But how does all this fit in with Christ the Messiah's given name "Jesus". The Gospel of Luke informs us that it was the angel Gabriel that informed Marry that she would conceive "and bring forth a son":

and [thou] shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest [i.e. Elyon]: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end. (Luke 1:30–33)

The Gospel of Matthew states that:

she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: ***for he shall save his people from their sins***. Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God [i.e. El] with us. (Matt 1:21–23)

There are a number of questions which naturally arise from what is written above. For one, in the passage from Matthew, it is inferred that the name "JESUS" is somehow related to the fact that "he shall save his people from their sins". By definition, what does the name "JESUS" have to do with his mission to save his people from their sins. Again, it is stated that somehow the name "JESUS" equates with the name "Emmanuel" which being

interpreted is "God with us". What does the name JESUS have to do with "God" being "with us". Finally, it is a fact that the name "JESUS" is not a Hebrew name — it is Greek, and we must seriously question why the God of the Hebrews would endow His own Son "JESUS" with a Greek name.

In coming to grips with these questions it is necessary to become acquainted with some of the details regarding the origins of the New Testament. Many scholars believe that originally the four Gospels were written in Aramaic, which was a Semitic language, closely related to Hebrew. In fact "Galilean Aramaic" was the daily dialect that was spoken by Jesus, and his disciples (*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* 1:188). Notwithstanding this, there are no original Aramaic texts of the Gospels or Jesus' sayings in existence — only their Greek translations have survived to be handed down. This being the case, the passages just quoted from Luke and Matthew are actually an English translation of the Greek translation of the original Aramaic texts of the New Testament Gospels.

This fact does shed light on the origin of Jesus' name — in fact the given name of "Jesus" was not Jesus at all. On the contrary, the name "JESUS" is the Greek form of the Hebrew name "Yehoshuah", just as "Christ" is the Greek form of the Hebrew title "Messiah", which is to say "the Anointed One." The Random House Dictionary states the following:

> **Jesus** . . . [1200–50 A.D.; Middle English < Late Latin *Iesus* < Greek *Iesous* < Hebrew *Yeshua*, syncopated variation of *Yehoshua'* God is help; in Early Modern English, the distinction (lost in Middle English) between *Jesus* (nominative) and *Jesu* (oblique, especially vocative; see Jesu) was revived on the model of Latin and Greek sources; Jesus gradually supplanted the older form in both nominative and oblique] (*The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, Second Edition, Unabridged*, 1027)

The following is taken from *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*:

> The English form of the word [Jesus] goes back to the Latin (Iesus), which transliterates the Greek; but the original Hebrew form was *Joshuah*, or more fully *Yehoshuah* ("Yahweh is salvation," or "Yahweh saves," or "Yahweh will save" . . . . . the first to bear the name was Joshua the son of Nun (Josh. 1:1), who led the Israelites in the conquest of Canaan. (*The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* 2:869)

It is interesting that Yahweh should endow His Son Jesus with the same name as Joshua, who had led the armies of Israel in the conquest of Canaan. This is especially significant in view of the common Jewish expectation that Christ the Messiah would deliver Israel from political bondage to the Roman Empire. But even more significant is the actual name of Christ the Messiah.

So "Jesus" is not the rightful name of Jesus after all — but "Yehoshuah" — and "Yehoshuah" means: "Yahweh is salvation", "Yahweh saves", or "Yahweh will save". Bearing this in mind, the statement in Matthew begins to make sense: "and thou shalt call his name Yehoshuah": "for he [Yahweh or Jesus] shall save his people from their sins". This definition of "Yehoshuah" is almost verbatim to that given in the Messianic Psalm: "Yahweh is my strength and song, and is become my salvation." (Psalm 118:14; see also Exodus 15:2) In view of all this, the reality of "Yehoshuah's" proclamation, that he came in the name of "Yahweh" his Father becomes clear — indeed, he was "Yahweh", and from the time of his birth he was indeed "God with us", even "Yahweh" the Son of "Yahweh".

We have already established the doctrine of scripture, that "Yahweh" is a name/title rightfully belonging to the Father. In keeping with this, *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible* suggests that "the very name Yahweh may have originated as a cultic epithet for El." (*IDB*, Supplementary Vol. 257–258) Erdman's *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament* argues for the same idea when it states that: "the name Yahweh itself originated as a hypocoristicon of a liturgical title of El" (*TDOT* 1:260)

So when Yehoshuah Ben David, the Messiah, came down on earth he took upon him the name of Yahweh — this is precisely

what he was saying when he proclaimed to the Jews that he came "in the name of Yahweh" his Father. But as we have already seen, the 32nd chapter of Deuteronomy would argue hard for the idea that Christ the Messiah had already been given that title in the primordial council in Heaven:

When Elyon assigned the nations their inheritance, when he divided up humankind, he set up the peoples' territories according to the number of El's sons; Yahweh's portion was his people, Jacob was his hereditary share. (*Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 5:19–520; see also *The Interpreters Bible* Vol. 1:360; Vol 2:519; *The Jerusalem Bible,* Deut. 32:8; *The Anchor Bible,* Deut. 32:8)

According to this then, among all El's posterity, the Children of Israel or the House of "Jacob" became the hereditary share or inheritance of Christ the Messiah, the future deliverer of all Israel. It was for this reason that Christ's calling was to Israel (Matt 10:5–6; 15:21–28) — this is the reason why He refused to minister to the Gentiles during his mortal ministry on Earth and it was for this same reason that Peter had a hard time taking the Gospel to the Gentiles (Acts 10:1–48; 11:1–18; Gal 2:1–14), as he knew that Christ the Messiah was the God of Israel, and not the God of Romans and Greeks (1 Sam 26:19; Jonah 1:3). It was only through the principle of Adoption into the family of Israel that El's children from other nations could be included in the covenant (Romans 11). And this Yahweh was a Jealous God when the children of his inheritance, even Israel, went whoring after strange Gods who had not been appointed to them (Deut. 4:19; 17:3).

So then, Christ the Messiah, "Yehoshuah", "Yahweh", was actually the Son of El — indeed, El's "firstborn" and birth-right heir, who in the Primordial Council sat at El's right hand. Remember what it says in Hebrews:

El, who at sundry times and in divers manners *spake in time past unto the fathers* ***by the prophets****, hath in these last days spoken unto us* ***by his Son,*** whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made

the worlds; who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down *on the right hand of the Majesty on high*; Being made so much *better than the angels*, *as he hath by inheritance obtained* ***a more excellent name than they***. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, **Thou art my Son**, this day have I begotten thee: and again, ***I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?*** And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the world, he saith, And ***let all the angels of God worship him***. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. ***But unto the Son he saith,*** *Thy throne,* ***O God****, is for ever and ever:* a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom. Thou has loved righteousness, and hated iniquity; ***therefore God, even thy God****, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows*. (Hebrews 1:1–9)

As is recorded in the Old Testament, the Father God Yahweh/El, had at times in the past spoken unto the Patriarchs and Prophets in person — however, in New Testament times, He had spoken exclusively through His Son, Yehoshuah ben David/Yahweh (Heb 1:1–2). Among all El's children, Christ the Messiah/Yahweh was special — he was the birthright heir of the family, even the "appointed heir of all things", and in the primordial Council he had sat at the right hand of the Father/God Yahweh/El (Psa 110:1; John 17:5; Acts 7:55–56; Heb 1:2–3). Not only so, but through this birthright Son, Yahweh/El had even "made the worlds" (Heb 1:2). As is recorded in the first chapter of Genesis verse 26, in primordial times, the Father God Yahweh/El [pro]created his "firstborn" Spirit Son, the future "Yehoshuah ben David", or more commonly, "Yehoshuah ben Adam", "in the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person" (Heb 1:3). In other words, Genesis 1:26 is the record of the SPIRIT BIRTH of Christ the Messiah, "the firstborn among many brethren" in the "Spirit Creation" (Rom 8:29). It was at this time that the Father God Yahweh/El [pro]created "Man", even "the Son of Man", in "the Brightness of His Glory" and the "Express Image" and "Likeness" of His person. Indeed, except

for age, they were look-alikes — like Father, like Son — the same name and the same face — only age and the Father/Son relationship distinguished them. "Being made so much better than the angels" who were El's other spirit children, "as he hath by inheritance" of the birthright, "obtained a more excellent name than they", even the name of "Yahweh" his Father. "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, **Thou art my Son**, this day have I begotten thee (Psa 2:7): and again, ***I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son?"*** (2 Samuel 7:14; 1 Chron 17:13). In continuing the 6th verse of Hebrews chapter 1 states:

> And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the [Spirit] World, he saith, And ***let all the angels of God worship him***. (Heb 1:6)

At this point we must ask ourselves — when did God the Father command "all the angels" to "worship" Christ the Messiah. The passage says that this took place when he brought "the first begotten into the world". This is a reference to Christ the Messiah, at his creation in the *Spirit World,* when he was procreated in the "Express image and likeness of the Father God El. It was in this "***first estate"*** (Jude 6) that the Christ was appointed as birthright heir of the Father, to take His place to future generations as Father God in the Cosmos: "So that Jesus treads in the tracks of his Father, and inherits what God did before", as the Prophet Joseph Smith expressed it (*TPJS* 348). It was at this time that "all the angels of God" were commanded to "worship" Christ the Messiah, as the Father's heir — it was just as it is stated in the above passage:

> And again, when he bringeth in the firstbegotten into the [Spirit] World, he saith, And ***let all the angels of God worship him***. (Heb 1:6)

But some angels refused to comply with the Father's command, even a third of the Host of Heaven (Rev 12:3–4, 7–9), and all these were cast down to Earth. This is the subject of Isaiah chapter 14 where it states:

How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning ["Day Star, son of Dawn" according to modern translations]! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, *I will exalt my throne* ***above the stars of El****:* I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; *I will be like* ***the most High***. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. (Isaiah 14:12–15)

In this passage, Satan wants to "be like Elyon" the "Most High", to be His successor, but as we have seen, it was Christ that was chosen as the "appointed heir of all things". A more complete account of what took place at this point is found in the book of Moses:

And I, the Lord God, spake unto Moses, saying: That Satan, whom thou hast commanded in the name of mine Only Begotten, is the same which was from the beginning, and he came before me, saying — Behold, *here am I, send me,* ***I will be thy son****, and I will redeem all mankind, that one soul shall not be lost,* and surely I will do it; *wherefore* ***give me thine honor***. But, behold, **my Beloved Son**, *which was* ***my Beloved*** *and* ***Chosen from the beginning****, said unto me — Father, thy will be done, and* ***the glory be thine forever***. Wherefore, because that Satan rebelled against me, *and sought to destroy the agency of man,* which I, the Lord God, had given him, and also, that I should give unto him mine own power; by the power of mine Only Begotten, I caused that he should be cast down; And he became Satan, yea even the devil, the father of all lies, to deceive and to blind men, and to lead them captive at his will, even as many as would not hearken unto my voice. (Moses 4:1–4)

So when Christ was chosen in the primordial Council, as heir to the Father, "all the angels of God" were commanded "to worship him", just as it says in verse 6 of the 1st chapter of Hebrews. Actually, this passage is a direct quote from Deuteronomy 32 in the "Septuagint", which again, is the Greek translation of the Old Testament, and interestingly enough, it comes from the same chapter from which we have already cited verse 8:

Remember *the days of **old***, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee. When Elyon assigned the nations their inheritance, when he divided up humankind, he set up the peoples' territories according to the number of El's sons; Yahweh's portion was his people, Jacob was his hereditary share. (Deut 32:7–8; *Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament*, Vol. 5:19–520; see also *The Interpreters Bible* Vol. 1:360; Vol 2:519; *The Jerusalem Bible,* Deut. 32:8; *The Anchor Bible,* Deut. 32:8)

To recapitulate, in this passage we see Christ the Messiah designated as Yahweh, one of the many spirit children of El, and heir to the Godship over all Israel. Verse 7 is a clear allusion to Primordial Times, when the events described in the following verse took place: "Remember *the days of **old***, consider the years of many generations". In recent times, scholars have come to realize that the original Hebrew word, from which "**Old**" is translated, is properly defined as a reference to primordial times or the pre-existence. It is significant, that in verse 8 as well as 43 from which Hebrews 1:6 is taken — in both cases, the original meaning of the verse has been obscured in the Maserotic Text, in an attempt to do away with polytheism in the Bible, and consequently it does not appear in the King James version. Nevertheless, this passage still remains in the Septuagint, where it is cited after a reference to the "Right Hand" of Yahweh:

For I will lift up my hand to heaven, and swear by my **right hand**, and I will say, I live for ever. . .

Rejoice, ye heavens, with him, *and let all the **angels of God worship him**;* rejoice ye Gentiles, with his people, and let all the sons of God strengthen themselves in him (Septuagint, Deut 32:40, 43)

No doubt, it is more than simple coincidence that this passage is found in the same chapter which speaks of the Primordial Council in Heaven, when Yahweh was designated as the son of El and heir to the Godship over all Israel. Indeed, the book of Hebrews affirms that the above passage speaks of the same primordial time, and that the passage in question directly refers

to the time when "all the angels of God" or "sons of El" were commanded to worship Christ the Messiah/Yahweh as El's heir and successor as Father God to future generations.

At the time of Christ, there were also other interpretations to this passage. Those who lacked understanding thought that it pertained to Father Adam rather than Christ the Messiah. Consider the following which is taken from a record which was written before the end of the first century of the Christian era:

> And the devil (Isa 14:12–15; Zeph 3:2; Ps 82:6–7; Lk 10:18; Jn 12:31; 2 En 29:4–5; Rev 12:9; 2 Pet 2:4; Gen 2:7; 1:27) sighed and said, "O Adam, all my enmity and envy and sorrow concern you, since because of you I am expelled and deprived of my glory which I had in the heavens in the midst of angels, and because of you I was cast out onto the earth." Adam answered, "What have I done to you, and what is my blame with you? Since you are neither harmed nor hurt by us, why do you pursue us?"
>
> The devil replied, "Adam, what are you telling me? It is because of you that I have been thrown out of there. When you were created, I was cast out from the presence of God and was sent out from the fellowship of the angels. When God blew into you the *breath of life* and *your* ***countenance and likeness*** were made *in the* ***image of God,*** Michael brought you *and made (us)* ***worship*** *you in the sight of God,* and *the* LORD *God said, 'Behold Adam! I have made you* ***in our image and likeness****.'*
>
> And Michael went out and called all the angels, saying, '***Worship the image of the LORD God,*** as the LORD God has instructed' (Gen 1:26; Rev. 12:7–12). And Michael himself worshipped first, and called me and said, '***Worship the image of God, Yahweh****.'* And I answered, 'I do not worship Adam.' And when Michael kept forcing me to worship, I said to him, 'Why do you compel me? I will not worship one inferior and subsequent to me. I am prior to him in creation; *before he was made, I was already made. He ought to worship me.'*
>
> When they heard this, other angels who were under me refused to worship him. And Michael asserted, '***Worship the image of God****.* But if now you will not worship, the LORD God will be wrathful with you.' And I said, 'If he be wrathful with me, *I will set my throne above the stars of heaven and* ***will be like the Most High****.'* (Isa 14:12–13; Dan 8:10; Obad 4; Job 22:12; Jude 6)

And the LORD God was angry with me *and sent me with my angels out from our glory;* and because of you, *we were expelled into this world* from our dwellings *and have been cast onto the earth*. And immediately we were made to grieve, since we had been deprived of so great glory. And we were pained to see you in such bliss of delights (Gen 3:1–7). So with deceit I assailed your wife and made you to be expelled through her from the joys of your bliss, *as I have been expelled from my glory."* (Life of Adam and Eve [Vita], 12:1–16:3,*Volume 2 The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, by James H. Charlesworth <1985> 262)

The whole setting as portrayed above is precisely that described in the 1st chapter of Hebrews and Isaiah chapter 14, with the difference that the author of the above does not understand that the being created in the 1st chapter of Genesis verse 26 was not Adam, but rather Christ the Messiah, the Son of Man, who in Primordial times, was procreated in the Brightness of El's Glory and the Express image of His person, just as it is stated in Genesis and the book of Hebrews. The fact is, the first mention of Adam in the Bible is found in the 2nd chapter of Genesis, where it states that on the seventh day of rest, Adam was made out of the "dust of the Earth" — at this point, there is no mention made of Adam being created "in the image and likeness of God".

So then, from the very beginning, Christ was the appointed heir of all things and the ultimate successor of his Father. Being procreated in the Express "Image" and "Likeness" of his Father, he also inherited his Father's name "Yahweh", and was to become a father God to future generations. Indeed, Christ the Messiah was destined to inherit this Earth. This is the precise idea to be conveyed in the 7th chapter of Daniel:

> As I looked,
> thrones were set in place,
> and the Ancient of Days took his seat.
> His clothing was as white as snow;
> the hair of his head was white like wool.
> His throne was flaming with fire,
> and its wheels were all ablaze.

A river of fire was flowing,
coming out from before him.
Thousands upon thousands attended him;
ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him.
The court was seated,
and the books were opened.

Then I continued to watch because of the boastful words the horn was speaking. I kept looking until the beast was slain and its body destroyed and thrown into the blazing fire. (The other beasts had been stripped of their authority, but were allowed to live for a period of time.)

In my vision at night I looked, and there before me was one like a son of man, coming with the clouds of heaven. He approached the Ancient of Days and was led into his presence. He was given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worshipped him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion that will not pass away, and his kingdom is one that will never be destroyed. (*NIV*, Daniel 7:9–14)

Here we see Christ the Messiah coming in the clouds of Heaven to receive his inheritance as ruler of the Cosmos under El, his Father God. The Prophet Joseph Smith has left the following commentary on this passage:

Dan 7 speaks of the Ancient of Days, he means the oldest man, our Father Adam, Michael; he will call his children together, and hold a council with them to prepare them for the coming of the Son of Man. He, (Adam) is the Father of the human family and presides over the Spirits of all men, and all that have had the Keys must stand before him in this great Council. This may take place before some of us leave this stage of action. The Son of Man stands before him and there is given him glory and dominion. ***Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ***, that which was delivered to him as holding the ***Keys of the Universe***, but retains his standing as head of the human family. (*The Words of Joseph Smith* 9)

On another occasion the Prophet said:

Commencing with Adam who was the first man who is spoken of in Daniel as being the "Ancient of days" or in other words the first and

oldest of all, the great grand progenitor of whom it is said in another place he is Michael because he was the first and father of all, not only by progeny, but he was the first to hold the spiritual blessings (*The Words of Joseph Smith* 39)

As has already been pointed out, in *The New International Dictionary Of New Testament Theology* C. Colpe states his belief, that the above vision portrays the retirement of "the supreme god, **El,** the **father of years**", who is "replaced as ruler" by a young God who is referred to in Daniel as "one like the Son of Man" (see *New Light on the Ancient Hebrew/Christian Doctrine on Deity Part 1, Doctrine of the Priesthood* Vol. 8, No. 1, p. 82, ft. note 172). But the opinions of international scholars fall into the shade when they are compared to the visions of a Prophet of God. Through the revelation of God, the Prophet Joseph Smith portrays the meaning of the vision more in accordance with divine Light, when he says that: "**Adam delivers up his stewardship to Christ**, that which was delivered to him as holding the **Keys of the Universe**, but retains his standing as head of the human family". On another occasion he explained the Principle of Divine Succession more completely:

What did Jesus do? why; I do the things I saw my Father do when worlds came rolling into existence. My Father worked out his kingdom with fear and trembling, and I must do the same; and when I get my kingdom, I shall present it to my Father, so that he may obtain kingdom upon kingdom, and it will exalt him in glory. *He will then take a higher exaltation,* ***and I will take his place****,* and thereby become exalted myself. *So that Jesus treads in the tracks of his Father,* ***and inherits what God did before****;* and God is thus glorified and exalted in the salvation and exaltation of all his children. (*TPJS* 347 – 348)

In this regard it is significant that not only did Christ the Messiah inherit the Divine name "Yahweh", but according to prophecy, ultimately he is to inherit all the Divine names of his Father, even that of "El". This is what is prophesied in the 9th chapter of Isaiah. Consider the following:

For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, ***the mighty El, The everlasting Father,*** The Prince of Peace. (Isaiah 9:6)

In Micah it is prophesied:

But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old [i.e. the pre-existence], from everlasting. (Micah 5:2)

Again, in Matthew, it states:

Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, El with us. (Matt 1:23)

In view of this, it becomes obvious that in the case of Christ the Messiah, the divine cycle had gone full swing. Through the successful completion of a probation in his "*first estate"* and the glorius triumph through his mortal birth and ministry, his crucifixion, death and Celestial Resurrection in his Second Estate — through these experiences, the Divine Son descended below all things, that he might in like manner rise above all things, that he might obtain "all power" both "in Heaven and in Earth" (Matt 28:18). In other words through the exalting principle of eternal progression in the Father's Gospel, "God the Son" advanced to become "God the Father". Inherent in this package, is the Divine fiat, that ultimately the exalted Son would inherit all the Divine names and attributes of Yahweh his Father — and thus shall he be called: "Wonderful", "Counselor", "***the mighty El****", **"the everlasting Father****", "The Prince of* ***Peace****"* and "***Yahweh****"*. So then, the Divine Son did indeed become the Divine Father — he was both "the Father and the Son" — he was a Son to his Father and a Father to his disciples!

APPEARANCES OF GOD THE FATHER — IN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT —

There is yet another issue regarding the Godhead which needs to be addressed, and this concerns the active participation of God the Father in the Old and New Testament, and the question as to whether or not He made personal appearances to the Patriarchs and Prophets. Many believe that the Father has never before shown Himself to mortal man, and in maintaining this position, some of them argue that it is impossible for a man to see the face of God and afterwards remain alive in the flesh. That this idea existed during Old and New Testament times cannot be denied — nevertheless, as we shall see, there are other proof texts which prove beyond a doubt that the Bible itself records many exceptions to this rule of thumb. Those who persist in this belief often refer to certain New Testament passages which speak of the "invisible God". For example, in Colossians it states that Christ is: "the image of the ***invisible God,*** the firstborn of every creature" (Col 1:15) Again in Timothy, the Father is referred to as: *"the King eternal, immortal,* ***invisible"*** and "the only wise God" (1st. Timothy 1:17) These references to the "invisible God" have been used as an argument to substantiate the uninspired doctrine of man, that no man has ever seen God the Father in the flesh and lived. Those who take this position often cite the following passages for authority:

And he said, *Thou canst not see my face:* ***for there shall no man see me, and live*** (Exodus 33:20)

No man hath seen God at any time*:* the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him. (John 1:18)

And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me. ***Ye have neither heard his voice at any time, nor seen his shape***. And ye have not his word abiding in you: for whom he hath sent, him ye believe not. (John 5:37–38)

No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. (1 John 4:12)

In contrast to these consider the following passages from the Old Testament:

And Jacob called the name of the place Penile [which being interpreted means "the face of El"]: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved. (Gen 32:30)

In Exodus it states:

And it came to pass, as Moses entered into the tabernacle, the cloudy pillar descended, and stood at the door of the tabernacle, and Yahweh talked with Moses. And all the people saw the cloudy pillar stand at the tabernacle door: and all the people rose up and worshipped, every man in his tent door. *And Yahweh spake unto Moses* ***face to face***, *as a man speaketh unto his friend*. And he turned again into the camp (Exodus 33:9–11)

In Deuteronomy it states:

Yahweh our God has shown us his glory and his greatness, and we have heard his voice from the heart of the fire. *Today we have seen that* ***God can speak with a human being and that person still live***. So why should we expose ourselves to death again? For this great fire might devour us if we go on listening to the voice of Yahweh our God, and then we should die. For what creature of flesh could possibly live after hearing, as we have heard, the voice of the living God speaking from the heart of the fire? (*NJB*, Deut 5:24–26)

In Isaiah it states:

In the year that King Uzziah died ***I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne,*** high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is Yahweh of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled with smoke.

Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: *for* ***mine eyes have seen the King, Yahweh*** *of hosts*. Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged. (Isaiah 6:1–5)

Those who persist in the idea that "no man" has ever "seen God at any time", fail to realize that the Bible itself records many instances when the Patriarchs and Prophets did in fact see God. Indeed, the Bible contains a history of the Father's covenant race, and their Holy Prophets who on numerous occasions knew and communed with God, and who saw Him "face to face". This single fact is the most remarkable aspect of the Bible — it is its most important contribution to the world of man. As the following citation from John points out, passages that teach that 'no man has ever seen God' are generally spoken in reference to the ungodly:

Not that any man hath seen the Father, **save he which is of God**, he hath seen the Father. (John 6:46)

It is in perfect keeping with the idea of the righteous entering into the presence of God, that the Book of Hebrews states the following:

By faith Moses, when he was come to years, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter; choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; Esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt: for he had respect unto the recompence of the reward. By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king: *for he endured,* ***as seeing him who is invisible*** (Heb 11:24–27)

So even the New Testament teaches that faithful Moses saw the "invisible God" and as we shall see, so also did Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. As it is stated in Genesis, they saw the Father,

"face to face", and yet their lives were preserved (Gen 32:30). In fact, it was the Father God in person who made the covenant with Abraham. Abraham's first Biblical encounter with Yahweh is recorded in Genesis 12:

Now Yahweh had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed. (Gen 12:1–3)

After Abraham arrived in the land of Canaan:

Yahweh appeared unto Abram, and said, Unto thy seed will I give this land: and there builded he an altar unto Yahweh, who appeared unto him. (Gen 12:7)

This same covenant is again repeated in the following chapter:

And Yahweh said unto Abram . . . Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward: For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever. And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth: so that if a man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee. (Gen 13:14–17)

This same covenant between Yahweh and Abraham is again repeated in a vision which is recorded in Genesis 15:

After these things the word of Yahweh came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram: I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward, And Abram said, Lord Yahweh, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless, and the steward of my house is this Eliezer of Damascus? And Abram said, Behold, to me thou hast given no seed: and, lo, one born in my house is mine heir. And, behold, the word of Yahweh came unto him, saying, This shall not be thine heir; but he that shall come forth out of thine own bowels shall be thine heir. And he brought him

forth abroad, and said, *Look now toward heaven, and tell t**he stars**, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, **So shall thy seed be***. And he believed in Yahweh; and he counted it to him for righteousness. And he said unto him, ***I am Yahweh** that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees,* to give thee this land to inherit it. . . . . *In the same day Yahweh made a covenant with Abram,* saying, Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: The Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites, and the Hittites, and the Perizzites, and the Rephaims, and the Amorites, and the Canaanites, and the Girgashites, and the Jebusites. (Gen 15:1–7, 18–21)

The most complete account of the Father's covenant with Abraham is found in Genesis chapter 17 where Yahweh appears to again reaffirm His covenant. One of the most significant differences in this passage is that on this occasion "Yahweh" is introduced to Abram by His alternate name "El Shaddai":

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, ***Yahweh** appeared to Abram*, and said unto him, *I am **El Shaddai**; walk before me, and **be thou perfect***. (Gen 17:1; See also the New Jerusalem Bible)

This passage contains the third reference to El in the Bible, and the first to "El Shaddai" — the first being found in Genesis 14, where Melchizedek is introduced as the "Priest of El Elyon" "the creator of Heaven and Earth". However, while the first only mentions El by name, in this case the Father God "El Shaddai/ Yahweh" actually appears to Abraham in person. After the formality of a brief introduction, the high morality of the Father God is immediately declared and becomes His first order of business, when He delivers to His servant Abraham His first commandment, and thereby enjoins upon him a life of virtue, high morality, personal integrity and an eternal quest for perfection: *"I am **El Shaddai**; walk before me, and **be thou perfect**"*. It is no surprise that 2000 years later Jesus delivered the same doctrine and the same words to his disciples: "**Be ye therefore perfect**" he commanded them, "*even as your Father which is in heaven*

is perfect" (Matt 5:48). This then was the Father's first commandment to Abraham — to live a perfect life — so much for the born again "Christian" dogma of salvation by grace without works — and so much for their opinions regarding the supposed benighted religion of the Patriarchs. As we have already seen, the Doctrine on Deity and religion of the Patriarchs was identical with that of the New Testament Jesus.

And when Abram was ninety years old and nine, **Yahweh** appeared to Abram, and said unto him, I am **El Shaddai**; walk before me, and **be thou perfect**. And I will make my covenant **between me and thee**, and will **multiply thee** exceedingly. And **Abraham fell on his face**: and God talked with him (Gen 17:1–3)

Here then is one of numerous instances where the "invisible God", even God the Father, appeared on this Earth to one of His children — and this too, for a far reaching and eternal purpose. The Father had come to establish His covenant with Abram[7] and his seed after him.

Understanding the nature of this covenant is important. The Covenant which the Father made with Abraham was to be an "Everlasting Covenant" that would pass down from generation to generation among Abraham's posterity. The condition of the covenant was that Abram and his posterity would walk before God and be "perfect".

At the appearance of the Father, "Abraham fell on his face" and did worship:

and God talked with him, saying, As for me, behold, **my covenant is with thee**, and thou shalt be **a father of many nations**. Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee. And I will make thee **exceeding fruitful**, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant **between me and thee and thy seed after thee** in their generations **for an everlasting covenant**,

[7] 3 Nephi 20:10–13, 20–22, 25, 27–31, 46; 21:4, 7; 16:10–15; 29:1; 1 Nephi 14:8; 15:18; 22:9, 11; 2 Nephi 29:14; Mor 5:20; Eth 13:11; D&C 132:30–37

to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee. And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God. (Gen 17:3–8)

The God of Heaven had come down on Earth — indeed the Father of all Gods and men had come down on Earth to establish His "Covenant". He had come to establish the "Covenant" of the "Royal Priesthood"[8] with Abraham and his posterity, as an everlasting inheritance. This Covenant had to do with the Royal family and Church of God the Father — even the Celestial order of the Elect — the "Church of the Firstborn".[9] It had to do with the fullness of the Father's Gospel (3 Nephi 16:10) and His Priesthood (D&C 77:11; Alma 13:18) — even the fullness of the Patriarchal Priesthood (*TPJS* 237, 322–323, 326), and the "Right of the Firstborn" (Abraham 1:2–4; Jeremiah 31:9; Ex 4:22; D&C 107:40–57) which Ab/Adam, the Father God, had passed down to His birthright heirs in the Priesthood.

By foreordained appointment and an immutable Promise, the Father had bequeathed His Priesthood as a perpetual inheritance to His "Elect" sons and daughters in the primordial Council — and all this too, by revelation and commandment, through the medium of the Lord's Anointed in mortal flesh, and the ordinance of the laying on of hands. This "Covenant" which the Father made with Abraham, pertained to the "Elect Seed" of El Shaddai[10] and the future lineage of their mortal birth on Earth. It pertained to the Stars of El (Isaiah 14:12–16; Psa 148:1–4) which constitute the "Hosts of Heaven and Earth" — yea even the "Elect" among the innumerable Host of the Father's Spirit Offspring[11] and their seed — even billions, who if you were to count the sand upon

[8] 1 Peter 2:5, 9; Exodus 19:6; Rev 1:6; 5:10; 20:4, 6; D&C 76:54–60

[9] *JST*, Gen 9:15, 17–23; Heb 12:23; D&C 88:5; 76:50–71, 92–96; *JD* 5:129; 8:154

[10] 1 Pet 1:2; 2:6; Isa 42:1; 45:4; 65:9, 22; Matt 24:22, 24, 31; Mk 13:20, 22, 27; Luke 18:7; Rom 8:33; 9:11; 11:5, 7, 28; Col 3:12; 1 Thes 1:4; 1 Tim 5:21; 2 Tim 2:10; Tit 1:1; Alma 13:4–5; D&C 29:7; 33:6; 35:20; 84:34; Moses 7:62

[11] James 1:17; Heb 12:9; Mal 2:10; Deut 32:5–9, 18–20; Num 16:22; 27:16; Ecc 3:21; 12:7; Zech 12:1

the sea shore, you could not number them. In short, it pertained to all those who in future generations were destined for a mortal probation on Earth (Psa 82:6–7).

By foreordained covenant, those chosen were to be the sons and daughters of Abraham in the flesh (Abraham 3:22–23). Through faithfulness in their "first estate", they had been "Elected" — hence the "Elect" seed of the Father. Through the merit of their good works in their "First Estate", they had been foreordained in the Primordial Council to be born on Earth in the lineage of the Priesthood — hence the "chosen race" of "Israel".

The "Elect" had been valiant in their "first estate" (John 9:2; Jer 1:5; Wisdom 8:19–20), and now they must successfully pass through the ordeal of their "Second Estate" (Jude 6; Abraham 3:22–28). They must come down on Earth where the Prince of Darkness reigns in the hearts of the children of men — they must do battle with Satan and overcome. They must be tabernacled in the flesh and in the hour of darkness and distress — in their time of weakness, they must overcome all things — they must overcome the world, the Devil and the temptations of the flesh. They must sacrifice all things — they must descend below all things, that they might rise above all things. According to the Covenant, the Elect Seed of the Father were to be born on Earth in the family and lineage of Abraham, "the father of the faithful" — hence the "Elect" would constitute the House of Israel and posterity of Abraham — the Royal Family of God the Father.

This was the covenant of the Patriarchal Priesthood which the Father bequeathed to Abraham and his posterity[12] — it would

[12]This covenant of the Father with Abraham is spelled out more perfectly in the Book of Abraham:

And, finding there was greater happiness and peace and rest for me, I sought for the blessings of the fathers, and the right whereunto I should be ordained to administer the same; having been myself a follower of righteousness, desiring also to be one who possessed great knowledge, and to be a greater follower of righteousness, and to possess a greater knowledge, and to be a father of many nations, a prince of peace, and desiring to receive instructions, and to keep the commandments of God, I became a rightful heir, a High Priest, *holding the right*

be to them that the Gospel and Priesthood would be entrusted as an everlasting inheritance — it would be through Abraham and his seed that all nations of the Earth would be blessed with the Gospel and its ordinances (Gen 18:18; 22:18; 26:4). Abraham's elect posterity were to be the Light Bearers of the Father — they would be the beacon to the Father's Children on Earth. And through the revelation of this Patriarchal Priesthood and sealing power, whomsoever they blessed would be blessed, and whomsoever they cursed would be cursed.[13]

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belonging to the fathers. It was conferred upon me from the fathers; ***it came down from the fathers***, from the beginning of time, yea, even from the beginning, ***or before the foundations of the earth*** *to the present time, even* ***the right of the firstborn****, on the first man,* ***who is Adam****, our first father, through the fathers unto me*. I sought for mine appointment unto the Priesthood *according to the appointment of God unto the fathers* ***concerning the seed***. . . . . .

And his voice was unto me: Abraham, Abraham, behold my name is Jehovah, and I have heard thee, and have come down to deliver thee . . . . . Behold, I will lead thee by my hand, and I will take thee, to put upon thee my name, even the priesthood of thy father, and my power shall be over thee. As it was with Noah so shall it be with thee; but through thy ministry my name shall be known in the earth forever, for I am thy God. . . . . .

But I Abraham, and Lot, my brother's son, prayed unto the Lord, and the Lord appeared unto me, and said unto me. Arise, and take Lot with thee; for I have purposed to take thee away out of Haran and to make of thee ***a minister*** *to bear my name in a strange land* which I will give unto thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession, when they hearken to my voice. . . . **My name is Jehovah**, and I know the end from the beginning; therefore my hand shall be over thee. And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee above measure, and make thy name great among all nations, and thou shalt be a blessing unto thy seed after thee, that in their hands they shall bear this ministry and Priesthood unto all nations; And I will bless them through thy name; for as many as receive this Gospel shall be called after thy name, and shall be accounted thy seed, and shall rise up and bless thee, as their father; And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse them that curse thee; and in thee (that is, in thy Priesthood) and in thy seed (that is, thy Priesthood), for I give unto thee a promise that *this right shall continue in thee, and in thy seed after thee* (that is to say, the literal seed, or the seed of the body) shall all the families of the earth be blessed, even with the blessings of the Gospel, which are the blessings of salvation, even of life eternal. (Abraham 1:2–4, 16, 18; 2:6–11)

[13]Gen 12:3; 18:18; 22:15–18; 26:4; 27:23, 28–30, 33; 28:14; 48:15–20; 49:1–28; Matt 16:19; 18:18; D&C 124:91–93, 124; 107:39–57; 86:7–11; 113:6–8; Moses 6:7

Again, be it remembered that El Shaddai/Yahweh is the Father God — He is "Ab Adam", the Father of all mankind — and not only of mortals, but He is the Father of Gods as well. This being the case, as far as men are concerned, El Shaddai is the epitome of fertility — He is the greatest fertility symbol in the cosmos. For women, only His wife Asherah or Eve can be compared to Him. Bearing this in mind, recollect that the Father God has just established His "Covenant" with Abraham, that he shall be fruitful — that he shall be the father of a multitude, even the father of nations — and that throughout time and eternity his seed shall be as numerous as the stars in the firmament or the particles of sand upon the sea shore (D&C 132:30). And though Abraham is 99 years old, and (excepting Ishmael) as of yet without children, still the Father has promised him, that he shall be prolific in his generations, that literally, his posterity shall number in the billions, and that the Elect Seed of the Father's Spirit Offspring shall be born on Earth through his lineage.

Truly, this is the greatest of all the Father's blessings — the power of propagation — to reproduce ones self through the sexual union of man and wife. This is the power of the Gods and the greatest blessing granted by the Father God to His children! Sexual reproduction is the fountain of Life — it is the vehicle by which Abraham was to realize the fulfillment of the Father's Covenant, that he and his Elect posterity might "multiply" and rejuvenate the Earth. The means with which the Father endowed Abraham, that he might realize the blessing of the Covenant was sexual reproduction and a fertile posterity. This was the Divine Fountain and through this means Abraham would become the Father of unnumbered billions. But if that Fountain should become corrupt — if the Divine Fountain should become polluted through corruption of the flesh, how great and everlasting are the consequences! Indeed, how shall Abraham and his posterity fulfill the "Covenant" — how shall the Royal Priesthood perform their duty, if they become degenerate. How shall they be the Light Bearers and lineage of the Elect seed of the Father,

if they should allow the Fountain of Life to become polluted through immorality.

Can the Royal Priesthood be born bastard? Can they become degenerate and still fulfill their foreordained role in the Covenant of the Father. No! In order to accomplish their Divine mission, the Children of the Covenant must be born on Earth through the pure lineage of the Priesthood — the Divine Fountain must remain unsullied! There must be No marriages with the Canaanites — indeed, No marriages outside the Covenant Race and No marriages outside the Faith. There must be No whoredom — No Free Love — No adultery — No fornication —-No sexual union outside the context of marriage — No masturbation — No spilling of the Divine seed upon the ground (Gen 38:7–10) — No sexual perversion — No homosexuality — No bestiality — No Birth Control — No Abortion. If a woman's health is not such that she cannot then bear children, she should abstain and wait until it is. The Fountain of Life must remain pure — it must be guarded against corruption of the flesh — the Royal Priesthood of the Father must live a life of sexual purity. Indeed, sexual purity is the Divine Law of the Father's Priesthood. **Sexual Purity** — Not Celibacy or Abstinence — Not Asceticism or Bachelorhood — but Sexual Purity. After all, how can the Royal Priesthood propagate the Elect Seed of the Father outside the bounds of the New and Everlasting Covenant of Marriage. The conditions of the "Everlasting Covenant" (Gen 17:7) in the Patriarchal Priesthood is not Celibacy, but Moral Cleanliness, and Sexual Purity as symbolized by Circumcision of the male Sexual Organ. This was the "Token" of the Father's Covenant and all those who refused to receive it and to abide by the Law thereof, were to be excommunicated from the children of the Covenant and the association of the family:

> And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations. This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; **Every man child among you shall be circumcised**. And ye shall circumcise

the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be **a token of the covenant** betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which is not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an **everlasting covenant**. And the uncircumcised man child whose flesh of his foreskin is not circumcised, that soul shall be **cut off** from his people; **he hath broken my covenant**. (Gen 17:9–14)

Here the Father commands Abraham to keep His "Covenant" and the same responsibility is enjoined upon his posterity: "Thou shalt keep my covenant . . . thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations." But how can Abraham's children keep the covenant if they are not taught by their parents to walk "in the way of Yahweh"? The Father made His "Covenant" with Abraham, that the Royal Seed would come through his lineage — but the blood must remain pure, and the fountain of Life clean and unsullied by the immoral practices of the Canaanites. To preserve the virtue of his posterity, Abraham and his generations must teach their children moral cleanliness and sexual purity. The Elect seed of the Father must not be born bastard — they must be born in the Everlasting Covenant of the Priesthood — in families where both parents believe — both must be strong — they must be married in the New and Everlasting Covenant. Parents must train up their children in the way of righteousness — even the infant must be circumcised — and hence the responsibility of the Parent — the children of the covenant must be taught from their childhood to walk before God and to "be thou Perfect" — then and only then will they be enabled to fulfill their role in the Covenant, as the Royal Priesthood of the Father! Hence the responsibility of the parent in all the future generations of Abraham, to set the feet of their children upon the path of Life, "in the way of Yahweh" and righteousness — the Doctrine of the Covenant must be enjoined upon the posterity of Abraham forever:

And Yahweh said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him? For I know him, *that he will command his children and his household after him,* and they shall keep **the way of Yahweh**, to do justice and judgment; that Yahweh may bring upon Abraham that which he hath spoken of him. And Yahweh said, Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is very grievous; I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me; and if not, I will know. (Gen 18:17–21)

Rest assured, it is no coincidence that the Father's admonition for Abraham: "to command his children and his household after him" to "keep the way of Yahweh" — it is no coincidence that this admonition is immediately followed by the story of Sodom and Gomorrah. Indeed, the story of Sodom is Yahweh's everlasting warning to the unborn generations of Israel — it is the Arch Type of Evil, and the ultimate omen to all those who desecrate the Divine Fountain. The children of Abraham must live a life of moral cleanliness and Sexual Purity — the Fountain of Life must remain pure forever! The Father's Covenant was that Abraham would be the father of Billions — even the Patriarch of the Elect Seed of the Father. The condition of the Covenant was moral cleanliness and Sexual Purity — the "Token" of the Covenant was Circumcision of the male Sexual Organ. Circumcision is the "Token" of the Everlasting Covenant — it is the Father's symbol for moral virtue. The flesh of the foreskin must be cut away as a symbol of Sexual Purity. Circumcision is the Token of the Father's Covenant with Israel — the Royal Family and Priesthood of the Father:

And Abraham took Ishmael his son, and all that were born in his house, and all that were bought with his money, every male among the men of Abraham's house; and circumcised the flesh of their foreskin in the selfsame day, as God had said unto him. And Abraham was ninety years old and nine, when he was circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin. And Ishmael his son was thirteen years old, when he was circumcised in the

flesh of his foreskin. In the selfsame day was Abraham circumcised, and Ishmael his son. And all the men of his house, born in the house, and bought with money of the stranger, were circumcised with him. (Gen 17:23–27)

After Abraham is instructed, he is then informed that his wife Sarai is to be the mother of the Covenant race. Inasmuch as Sarai was ninety years old and childless, Abraham found this difficult to believe. Nevertheless, El Shaddai insisted that she would give birth to Isaac, the birthright son and Heir to the Covenant Race of the Father:

And God said unto Abraham, As for Sarai thy wife, thou shalt not call her name Sarai, but Sarah shall her name be. And I will bless her, and give thee a son also of her, and she shall be a mother of nations; kings of people shall be of her. Then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed, and said in his heart, Shall a child be born unto him that is an hundred years old? and shall Sarah, that is ninety years old, bear? And Abraham said unto God, O that Ishmael might live before thee! And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son indeed; and *thou shalt call his name* ***Isaac****:* and *I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant,* and ***with his seed after him***. And as for Ishmael, I have heard thee: Behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, and will multiply him exceedingly; twelve princes shall he beget, and I will make him a great nation. *But my covenant will I establish with* ***Isaac****,* which Sarah shall bear unto thee at this set time in the next year. And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham. (Gen 17:15–22)

The next Theopheny of the Father God is found in the following chapter in Genesis 18, where He appears as "Yahweh" in company with two angels. Together these personages are referred to as "three men" (Gen 18:3, 16, 22), with the first being directly addressed as "Yahweh" (Gen 18:1, 3, 10, 13, 14, 17, 20, 22, 26, 33) and the others being spoken of as "two angels" (Gen 18:33; 19:1), who in the end leave the company of Abraham and Yahweh, and head off to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen

18:22; 19:1). What is significant is that in this passage God the Father is declared to be a man (Gen 18:3, 16, 22) — even a male personage of tabernacle, who is possessed of a Physical body of flesh and bone as tangible as man's (D&C 130:22). The Biblical account of this Divine visitation even goes so far as to say that Abraham washed Yahweh's feet while He rested under the shade of the Great Oak tree (Gen 18:4). Following this a feast was prepared (Gen 18:5–8; 19:3), and the Elect Patriarch of the Covenant race stood by as the Father God honored him by eating at his table (Gen 18:8). This token of esteem and respect, in allowing Abraham to personally attend and serve the Father, was never granted to any other Prophet or Patriarch in biblical history, and because of it, future generations bequeathed to Abraham the title "the Friend of God" (James 2:23; 2 Chronicles 20:7; Isaiah 41:8).

It is interesting that centuries later there were others who requested this same great honor, during Theophanys involving the Angel of Yahweh — they wanted to set a meal before him, that he might eat. But as the Bible attests, they were refused (Judges 6:15–21; 13:15–20) and this too for obvious reasons — one being that as of that time, the future Christ or Messiah was a personage of spirit who did not yet possess a tabernacle of flesh and bone (Ether 3:6–16), nor for that matter would he until more than a thousand years later, when he was given mortal birth on Earth and received his Resurrection. For this reason, at the time of the Exodus, the Angel of Yahweh did not eat physical food. This however is in marked contrast to what he did when he appeared to his disciples after his resurrection.

What follows constitutes the beginnings of Divine Christianity at the miraculous resurrection of Jesus Christ:

> And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, *and supposed that they had seen a spirit*. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: ***handle me, and see;***

*for **a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have***.[14] And when

[14]In an attempt to wrest the scriptures, Walter Martin and other deceivers have coupled this passage with the statement in John 4:24, where it is stated that: "God is a Spirit". According to this argument, since "God is a Spirit" and since as it says in Luke 24:39, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones", it only follows that the Father does not possess a physical body, and any opposing idea is held out to be false doctrine and contrary to the Bible.

While at first glance this argument may appear completely logical, it is nonetheless a total deception. You might just as well argue that Jesus taught his disciples to commit suicide — after all, the Bible does say that "Judas . . . . went and hanged himself" (Matt 27:3, 5) and Jesus said, "Go, and do thou likewise" (Luke 10:37). You can prove almost anything when you take things out of context.

For example, in order to follow Martin's argument to its natural conclusion, we must believe that only the dead can worship God. After all, the passage in question does say that "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit" (John 4:24). Since according to Walter's argument, "a spirit hath not flesh and bones", it only follows that no mortal man has a spirit, for all mortal men possess "flesh and bones". So according to this cute little twist, since the Divine decree is that those who worship God "must worship Him in spirit", it must be true that only the spirits of the dead can worship God — because all mortals are in the flesh and only the dead are in the spirit. And since "a spirit hath not flesh and bones", it is obvious that no mortal has a spirit, because all mortals have flesh and bones — so only the dead possess a spirit — and only the dead can worship God — because only the dead are in the spirit, and those that worship him "must worship him in spirit" — but contrary to this, all mortals are in the flesh.

Again, be it remembered that the Gospel of Luke emphatically declares that the resurrected Christ does in fact possess a physical body of flesh and bones (Luke 24:36–43) — yet according to Martin, this self same passage also declares that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones". If both statements are true, we are forced to believe that the resurrected Christ does not possess "a Spirit", because Luke says that he possesses flesh and bones.

Again, if we continue in Martin's logic, we must also believe that since the resurrected Christ does not possess "a Spirit", he could not be God — not even God the Son — because as John perfectly defines it, "God is a Spirit", and Luke says that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones". Yet according to this same passage of scripture, the resurrected Christ does possess flesh and bones. So according to Martin's reasoning, the resurrected Christ could not be God, because John says that "God is a Spirit", but Luke says that the resurrected Christ is not "a spirit".

The problem gets even bigger when we connect these two passages with what it says in the Book of James — for James says that "the body without the spirit is dead" (James 2:26), while Luke says that the resurrected Christ possesses "flesh and bones", but that he does not possess "a spirit", for "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have". In other words, the resurrected Christ has a "body", but not "a spirit", so according to James, he must be dead! But if he is dead, what are we to understand of the resurrection?

This is Walter Martin's reasoning, and if we follow it to its natural conclusion, we must believe that Jesus Christ was not really resurrected! After all, what is the Resurrection, if not the Reunion of Body and Spirit. But if no spirit hath flesh and bones, how can there be a Reunion — and if there is no Reunion, how can there be a Resurrection? Again, if there is no resurrection, how can we believe in Jesus Christ. Indeed, to deny the Resurrection is to deny Jesus Christ (1 Cor 15:12–20)!

So then, according to Martin there is no Resurrection, and if there is no resurrection, then the Saducees were right and Jesus was wrong (Matt 22:23; Mark 12:18; Luke 20:27; Acts 23:8). Not only so, but it becomes a great mystery just how Jesus (who according to Walter, was nothing but a bag of dust) was raised from the dead without his spirit and appeared before his disciples talking to them — and all this too, while at the same time, he was without a Spirit, and consequently completely void of intelligence.

In summery, it becomes self evident that when Walter Martin chose to deny that the Father God possessed a physical body — at one and the same time, he also denied the doctrine taught in Hebrews, which says that the resurrected Christ was the "brightness" of his Father's glory and the "express image of his person" (Heb 1:3). This passage teaches that whatever the Father was, so also became the Son in the resurrection, when he "sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high". In other words, if we are to believe that through the resurrection Christ took upon himself the very nature of his Father, we must also believe that the Father had long since already been what the Son only then became. Indeed, it was not until the Resurrection that Jesus became perfectly like his Father in all things (1 Cor 15:48–49; Col 1:15; 3:1, 10; Rom 8:29–34; 2 Cor 4:4–6; 1 Cor 11:7; Rom 6:4–6; 1 John 3:1–3). If this is not so, then we must deny that the Resurrected Christ became the express image and likeness of his Father.

Again in the Gospel of John, Jesus said that "he who hath seen me hath seen the Father" (John 14:7–9). No matter how one looks at it, it cannot honestly be denied that this passage declares the Father to be a tabernacled being, as that is precisely what Jesus was when he said it. And this is so, no matter how we are to interpret the passage — whether we are to understand that literally speaking, Jesus is both the Father and the Son, or merely His look/alike twin, as is stated in the Book of Hebrews (1:3) — in either case, this passage teaches that the Father is a tabernacled being.

In view of all this, it is obvious, that not only did Martin deny the doctrine of these two passages — he also denied the spiritual essence of Jesus Christ and his Divinity. But then, what about the doctrine taught in the Gospel of John, that God is "a Spirit"?

That God is innately a "spiritual being" cannot be disputed nor denied. But then, fundamentally speaking, so also is mortal man — it is only his tabernacle of flesh and bone, that, as the scriptures tell us, is composed of the dust of the earth (D&C 93:33–35).

Throughout the Scriptures, "the spirit in man that giveth life" is clearly distinguished from the physical body or tabernacle which his spirit inhabits — this is precisely what it states in James:

"For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (James 2:26)

Again in Ecclesiastes it states:

Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it. (Ecc 12:7; see also Ecc 3:20–21)

As the above states, mortal man is composed of two things — namely, the body and the spirit, and according to scripture, it is the union of body and spirit which constitutes the "soul" of man (D&C 88:14–17). When that union is dissolved, what follows is mortal death (James 2:26). According to this then, the spirits of mortal men do in fact possess flesh and bones, just as the resurrected body of Jesus Christ was possessed by a Spirit. It is a disembodied spirit, or a ghost that has passed through death, that does not possess flesh and bones, and this is the real context of Luke 24. At first, when Jesus appeared to his disciples, they were frightened and thought that they were looking at a ghost, or the disembodied spirit of a dead man. But Jesus laid this question to rest when he invited them to touch his hands and feet, and then he told them that "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have":

"And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them . . . . But they were terrified and affrighted, *and supposed that they had seen a spirit*. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: ***handle me, and see;*** *for* ***a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have***. And when he had thus spoken, ***he shewed them his hands and his feet***. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, **Have ye here any meat**? And **they gave him a piece of a broiled fish**, **and of an honey comb**. And he took it, **and did eat before them**. (Luke 24:36–43)

Some of the modern translations have removed the temptation for men like Walter Martin to wrest this passage, by replacing the word "spirit" with "ghost".

Interestingly enough, among these is the *New International Version*, which was the translation preferred by Walter Martin. Consider the following:

"While they were still talking about this, Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you." They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."

"When he had said this, he showed them his hands and feet. And while they still did not believe it because of joy and amazement, he asked them, "Do you have anything here to eat?" They gave him a piece of broiled fish, and he took it and ate it in their presence." (*NIV*, Luke 24:36–43)

The following is taken from *The New Jerusalem Bible*:

"They were still talking about all this when he himself stood among them and said to them, 'Peace be with you!' In a state of alarm and fright, they thought they were seeing a ghost. But he said, 'Why are you so agitated, and why are these doubts stirring in your hearts? See by my hands and my feet that it is I myself. Touch me and see for yourselves; a ghost has no flesh and bones as you can see I have.' And as he said this he showed them his hands and his feet. Their joy was so great that they still could not believe it, as they were dumb-founded; so he said to them, Have you anything here to eat?' And they offered him a piece of grilled fish, which he took and ate before their eyes. (*The New Jerusalem Bible*, Luke 24:36–43; see also *The New International Version*)

According to the Gospels, at the time of Christ's death, his body gave up the ghost (Matt 27:50; Mark 15:39; Luke 23:46; John 19:30). This was when his body of flesh and bones was separated from his spirit, which as James said, was the ultimate cause of death (James 2:26). Again, according to Peter, it was at this time that Christ was "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in Prison":

"Which sometime were disobedient, when once the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. . . . . For for this cause was the gospel preached also to them that are dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." (1 Peter 3:18–20; 4:6)

Since as James taught, the death of Jesus constituted Christ giving up the Ghost, so also the resurrection of Christ can be understood as none other than the eternal reunion of body and spirit.

So then, "God is a Spirit", even "a personage of Spirit", just as we are, but as we have seen, this does not deny that the Father God is possessed of a physical body, any more than it denies that Jesus Christ is so possessed, and as we shall see, the fact that the Father does possess a physical body is blatantly stated in Genesis chapter 18!

he had thus spoken, ***he shewed them his hands and his feet***. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, **Have ye here any meat**? And **they gave him a piece of a broiled fish**, **and of an honey comb**. And he took it, **and did eat before them**. And he said unto them, These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me. Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. And ye are witnesses of these things.

And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven. **And they worshipped him**, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy: And were continually in the temple, praising and blessing God. Amen. (Luke 24:36–53)

In summary, it is clear from the 18th chapter of Genesis that God the Father possesses a physical body of flesh and bone. It is also clear from the 24th chapter of Luke, that after his crucifixion, Christ the Messiah took upon himself the same physical form and glorified nature of his Father. This Christ did when through the power of the Father, his physical body was raised from the "corruption" of a mortal grave to become a glorified Celestial body of flesh and bone. As it says in Hebrews, Christ "being the brightness of his [Father's] glory, and the express image of his [Father's] person . . . when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high" (Heb 1:3). As we have already seen, we know that in the resurrection Christ received a glorified physical body — we know this through the testimony of his disciples, who handled his hands and felt his wounds, as he stood before them eating fish, and it is this self same Celestial Resurrection of the mortal body (D&C 88:14–39) that constitutes the Immortality and Eternal Life which is promised to the Faithful Saints:

And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and saith unto them, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified and affrighted, and supposed that they had seen a spirit. And he said unto them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself: handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have. And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet. And while they yet believed not for joy, and wondered, he said unto them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honey comb. And he took it, and did eat before them. (Luke 24:36–43)

In view of all this consider the following:

Now Yahweh appeared to Abraham at the great Oak tree of Mamre, while he was sitting at the tent door during the hottest part of the day. And when he lifted up his eyes and looked, behold, three men were standing opposite him at a distance; and when he saw them, he ran from the tent door to meet them, and bowed himself to the earth in worship, and said, "O Yahweh, if I have found favor in your sight, please do not pass your servant by. Please allow me to *bring a little water and* ***wash your feet****, and rest yourselves under the tree;* and I will bring ***a piece of bread****,* that you may refresh yourselves; after that you may go on your way, since you have visited your servant." And they said, "So do, as you have said."

So Abraham hurried into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Quickly, prepare three measures of fine flour, knead it, and make bread cakes." Abraham also ran to the herd, and took a tender and choice calf, and gave it to the servant: and he hurried to prepare it. *And he took curds and milk and the calf which he had prepared, and placed it before them;* and he was standing by them under the tree **as they ate**.

Then they said to him, "Where is Sarah your wife?" And he said, "Behold, in the tent." And Yahweh said, "I will surely return to you at the time of life in the Spring of next year; and behold, Sarah your wife shall have a son." And Sarah was listening at the tent door, which was behind him. Now Abraham and Sarah were old, well advanced in years; and Sarah was beyond the age of childbearing. And Sarah laughed to herself, as she thought, saying, "After I have become old, shall I have pleasure, my lord being old also?" And Yahweh said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, saying, 'Shall I truly bear a child, when I am so old?' Is anything too difficult for Yahweh? At the appointed time I will return

to you, at this time next year, and Sarah shall have a son." Sarah denied it however, saying, "I did not laugh"; for she was afraid. And He said, "No, but you did laugh."

Then the men rose up from there, and looked down toward Sodom; and Abraham was walking with them to see them off. And Yahweh said, "Shall I hide from Abraham what I am about to do, since Abraham will surely become a great and mighty nation, and in him all the nations of the earth will be blessed? "For I know him well and have chosen him, knowing that he will command his children and his household after him **to keep the way of Yahweh**, by doing what is upright and just; so that Yahweh can carry out for Abraham what He has promised him." And Yahweh said, "The outcry of Sodom and Gomorrah is indeed great, and their sin is exceedingly grave. "I will go down now, and see if they have done entirely according to its outcry, which has come to Me; and if not, I will know." Then ***the men*** turned away from there and went toward Sodom, *while Abraham was still standing before Yahweh*. And Abraham came near and said, "Wilt Thou indeed sweep away the righteous with the wicked? (Gen 18:1–23 — see *NASB; NJB; RSV; NIV; NWT; Holy Bible, Ancient Eastern Text; Holy Bible 1611 KJV; SEPT*)

It will be noticed that the above passage contains some differences from the translation as given in the King James Version. A careful reading will reveal that in substance they are basically the same, nevertheless, there are some differences which serve to further clarify the text. These differences are taken from other translations. You will notice for example that in the first verse it states that Yahweh appeared to Abraham "at the Great Oak tree of Mamre". The King James version states that Yahweh appeared to Abraham in the "plains of Mamre". The correction is based upon information given in most all of the newer translations. The fact that this is according to the original Hebrew is confirmed even further by the content of verses 4 and 8, where even in the King James Version, the tree under which Yahweh rested is still spoken of.[15]

Further corrections are found in verses 3 and 10, where in both passages, the name "Yahweh" is restored to the text. In the King

[15]It is also consistent with the Theophany in Judges chapter 6 verses 11 and 19.

James Version, verse 3 reads "Lord", and verse 10 "he", however, other ancient texts have surfaced which show that originally both verses read "Yahweh" in the original Hebrew.[16] No doubt early translators removed the Divine name "Yahweh" from these passages in order to soften the hard-core theomorphisms which speak of the Father God *having His feet **washed**, **resting** under the shade tree,* and ***eating** the meal which had been especially prepared for Him*. It might be said though, that even without the textual restoration of the Divine name "Yahweh" to these two verses — even without this restoration, still when read as a whole, the meaning and obvious context of this chapter remains the same.

There is yet another passage which affirms that the Father has a physical body of flesh and bone. As in the above, so also in this — initially, God is referred to as "a man" — it is only in the end of the passage that this "man" is identified as "God":

> And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled **a man** with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for **as a prince hast thou power with God** and with men, and hast prevailed. And Jacob asked him, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Wherefore is it that thou dost ask after my name? And he blessed him there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel: *for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved*. (Gen 32:24–30)

[16]See for example: *Holy Bible from the Ancient Eastern Text* as translated by George M. Lamsa from the Aramaic of the Peshitta — the *New World Translation of the Holy Scriptures — The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocrypha Expanded Edition Revised Standard Version* — and *The Septuagint with Apocrypha: Greek and English* by Brenton. In the case of the Septuagint, the word "Yahweh" is consistently translated as "God" or "Lord" — in verse 1 "Yahweh" is rendered as "God", while in verse 3 and most other places, it is translated as "Lord".

It is obvious that the "man" who wrestled with Jacob had a Physical body. It is also obvious that this same "**man**" later identified Himself as "**God**" whom Jacob saw "**face to face**". Of course it was not until after the wrestling match that Jacob finally learned the Divine identity of his opponent. According to this then, God being the man who wrestled with Jacob — it only follows that God has a physical body. The passage itself is clear — the only problem is with the modern world of religious "philosophers" who find it unthinkable to believe that the God of Heaven has a physical body, or that He would stoop so low as to have a wrestling match, and thus require a little work and sweat out of his servant Jacob before giving him a blessing. This is not in accordance with the current "Born Again Christian" idea of Salvation by Grace *without* Works. No doubt this passage is the original source of the "Old" religious cliché which speaks of having to "wrestle with God" in order to obtain your blessings. Such is life in mortality — "the vale of tears".

For those who would attempt to squeeze between the cracks, and deny that this passage identifies "God" as the "man" who wrestled with Jacob and blessed him to be called "Israel" — they will be interested in the fact that this same event is again recounted three chapters later, and that it clearly states that El Shaddai was the "Man" who appeared to Jacob in Genesis chapter 32 and blessed him to be named "Israel":

> And God appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of Padanaram, and blessed him. **And God said unto him**, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but **Israel** shall be thy name: and he called his name Israel. **And God said unto him**, **I am El Shaddai**: be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee, and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. (Gen 35:9–13)

No doubt there will be those who have difficulty believing that the Scriptures would refer to God as a "Man", yet as we have

seen, at times this is precisely what the Bible does. If this should be taken as an offense, then we must acknowledge that Jesus was the greatest offender, for he spoke of God as a "Man" every day. He did this every time he said that he was "the Son of Man", every time he said he was "the Son of God", and every time he said that God was his Father. Be it remembered that children grow up to be like their parents, and if Jesus was the Son of God, it is only to be expected that he would grow up to be like his Divine parent — indeed this is precisely what the scriptures teach, that Jesus was the express image and likeness of his Father, yet all this notwithstanding, like the rest of humanity, Jesus was a man, even "the Son of Man", and every day he went among the people and passed himself off as such. From Genesis to Revelations, the Father God is consistently described and referred to as a Man — and a Man too, in whose express image and likeness, Jesus His first born Son, and all mankind besides are made. In fact, there is no place in the Bible where God is defined in any other terms.[17] Certainly this is the message of the resurrected Lord when he appeared to his disciples and commanded them:

> touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto **my Father**, and **your Father**; and to **my God**, and **your God**." (John 20:17)

The following is yet another passage which speaks of God as "a Man":

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[17]This is not to say that God is a Man that he should lie. As it is expressed in Numbers:

> "El is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numbers 23:19)

This passage does not deny the human personhood of God — "El is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent:", but he is a Man nonetheless. To be sure, what this passage emphatically states is that God is not a liar, for as the scripture expresses it:, He is "a God of Truth, and canst not lie" (Ether 3:12; Tit 1:2; Heb 6:18).

And it came to pass, when Joshua was by Jericho, that he lifted up his eyes and looked, and behold, there stood ***a man*** *over against him with his sword drawn in his hand:* and Joshua went unto him, and said unto him, Art thou for us, or for our adversaries? And he said, Nay; but as ***captain of the host of Yahweh*** am I now come. And *Joshua fell on his face to the earth, and did* ***worship,*** and said unto him, What saith **Yahweh** unto his servant? And the captain of Yahweh's host said unto Joshua, *Loose thy shoe from off thy foot; for the place whereon thou standest is holy*. And Joshua did so.

Now Jericho was straitly shut up because of the children of Israel: none went out, and none came in. And **Yahweh** said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valour. (*KJV*, *HBAET*, *SAGE*, Joshuah 5:13–15; 6:1–2)

It will be noticed that the second reference to Yahweh is not to be found in the King James Version. No doubt it was eliminated for the same reasons as given in Genesis 18, in order to soften certain anthropomorphic theomorphisms, and to make allowance for other interpretations. Nevertheless, as indicated above, other ancient manuscripts reveal that the original Hebrew read "Yahweh".

It will also be noticed that in the King James Version, the last paragraph of the above passage is set apart from the text which precedes it, by being placed in a different chapter. Adam Clarke, in his commentary on the Bible criticizes this chapter break (which does not occur in the original Hebrew) on the basis that it destroys continuity,[18] but he fails to recognize the obvious

[18]According to Clarke, the chapter break should have occurred at the beginning of verse 13 — either this or chapters 5 and 6 should have remained as one chapter. As Clarke expressed himself:

"The sixth chapter should have commenced here [i.e. chapter 5:13], as this is an entirely new relation; or these two chapters should have made but one, as the present division has most unnaturally divided the communication which Joshua has from the angel of the Lord, and which is continued to verse 5 of chapter 6."

In continuing Clarke speaks of the chapter break at the end of verse 15 as follows:

reasons which the translators had for doing it. By removing the reference to the "man" as "Yahweh" in verse 14 and breaking the chapter after verse 15, it makes it possible to claim a separation between "Yahweh" and "the man" with the sword who is identified as the "captain of the host of Yahweh". Nevertheless, while these perversions of the text make other interpretations possible, a casual reading of these passages will reveal that the original meaning is still obvious, for "the man" with a sword commands Joshua to take off his shoes, just as "God" commanded Moses at the burning bush,[19] and "Joshua fell on his face to the Earth and did worship" the "man" with the sword. Without a doubt, this constitutes a clear statement that the "captain of the host of Yahweh" was God.

There are besides this, several other passages of scripture which portray God as a General, and the defender of Israel — and not only is He portrayed as Israel's defender, but He is also declared to be a "man". Exodus chapter 15 even goes so far as to refer to "Yahweh" as "a man of war":

> Then sang Moses and the children of Israel this song unto Yahweh, and spake, saying, I will sing unto Yahweh, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. Yahweh is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is El, and I will prepare him an habitation [i.e. a Temple]; my father's God, and I

"There is scarcely a more unfortunate division of chapters in the whole Bible than that here. Through this very circumstance many persons have been puzzled to know what was intended by this extraordinary appearance, because they supposed that the whole business ends with the chapter, whereas, it is continued in the succeeding one, the first verse of which is a mere parenthesis, simply relating the state of Jericho at the time that Joshua was favoured by this encouraging vision." (*The Holy Bible containing the Old and New Testaments . . . with A Commentary and critical notes . . . Vol 2: <by Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.S.A., &c., published by Abingdon, at Nashville>* 23, 24)

[19]The Book of Exodus states that "God" called unto Moses out of the midst of the bush, and commanded him saying "Draw not nigh hither: ***put off thy shoes from off thy feet****, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground*. Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God." (Exodus 3:4–6)

will exalt him. Yahweh is **a man of war**: Yahweh is his name. (Exodus 15:1–3)

It is interesting that according to other passages in the Old Testament, it is the Archangel "Michael" who is set forth as the defender of Israel. The 12th chapter of Daniel states the following:

And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book. (Daniel 12:1; see also 10:13, 21)

Michael's Biblical role as defender of Israel is in perfect harmony with the revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith, who declared that "Ab Adam", "the Ancient of Days" was to be identified as "Michael the Archangel".[20] On December 27th, 1832, he received a revelation which states the following:

[20]The following passages from the Doctrine and Covenants state that Adam, Michael the Archangel, and the Ancient of Days are all titles applying to the same Divine Being:

"And also with Michael, or Adam, the father of all, the prince of all, the ancient of days;" (D&C 27:11)

Three years previous to the death of Adam, he called Seth, Enos, Cainan, Mahalaleel, Jared, Enoch, and Methuselah, who were all high priests, with the residue of his posterity who were righteous, into the valley of Adam-ondi-Ahman, and there bestowed upon them his last blessing. And the Lord appeared unto them, and they rose up and blessed Adam, and called him Michael, the prince, the archangel. And the Lord administered comfort unto Adam, and said unto him: I have set thee to be at the head; a multitude of nations shall come of thee, and thou art a prince over them forever. And Adam stood up in the midst of the congregation; and, notwithstanding he was bowed down with age, being full of the Holy Ghost, predicted whatsoever should befall his posterity unto the latest generation. These things were all written in the book of Enoch, and are to be testified of in due time." (D&C 107:53–57)

"Adam-ondi-Ahman, because, said he, it is the place where Adam shall come to visit his people, or the Ancient of Days shall sit, as spoken of by Daniel the prophet." (D&C 116)

And Michael, the seventh angel, even the arch-angel, shall gather together his armies, even the host of heaven. And the devil shall gather together his armies; even the hosts of hell, and shall come up to battle against Michael and his armies. And **then cometh the battle of the great God**; and the devil and his armies shall be cast away into their own place, that they shall not have power over the saints any more at all. For Michael shall fight their battles, and shall overcome him who seeketh the throne of him who sitteth upon the throne, even the Lamb. (D&C 88:112–115)

The consistent characterization of God in these passages would indicate that "Yahweh/El", "the man of war" in Exodus 15, and "Yahweh", "the captain of the host of Yahweh" in Joshua 5, together with "Michael the Archangel", the "Prince", in the Doctrine and Covenants and Daniel, are all characterizations of the same Divine being, who is properly identified as "El", "Ab Adam", the Father God.

Following Genesis 18, the next recorded appearance of the Father God is found in chapter 26, where He appears to Isaac during a famine:

And **Yahweh** appeared unto him, and said, Go not down into Egypt; dwell in the land which I shall tell thee of: Sojourn in this land, and I will be with thee, and will bless thee; for unto thee, and unto thy seed, I will give all these countries, and I will perform the oath which I sware unto Abraham thy father; And *I will make thy seed to multiply* ***as the stars of heaven****,* and will give unto thy seed all these countries; and *in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed;* Because that Abraham obeyed my voice, and kept my charge, my commandments, my statutes, and my laws. (Gen 26:2–5)

Later in the same chapter, it states that Yahweh made yet another appearance:

And **Yahweh** appeared unto him the same night, and said, *I am the God of Abraham* thy father: fear not, for I am with thee, and will bless thee, *and multiply thy seed* for my servant Abraham's sake. And he builded an altar there, and called upon the name of **Yahweh**, and pitched his tent there: and there Isaac's servants digged a well. (Gen 26:24–25)

In the 28th chapter of Genesis, Isaac speaks of El Shaddai — and Yahweh appears to Jacob in a dream/vision:

And Rebekah said to Isaac, I am weary of my life because of the daughters of Heth: if Jacob take a wife of the daughters of Heth, such as these which are of the daughters of the land, what good shall my life do me?

And Isaac called Jacob, and blessed him, and charged him, and said unto him, Thou shalt not take a wife of the daughters of Canaan. Arise, go to Padanaram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother. ***El Shaddai*** *bless thee, and make thee fruitful, and multiply thee,* that thou mayest be a multitude of people; And give thee the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee; that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham. And Isaac sent away Jacob: and he went to Padanaram unto Laban, son of Bethuel the Syrian, the brother of Rebekah, Jacob's and Esau's mother.

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And Jacob went out from Beersheba, and went toward Haran. And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. And *behold,* ***Yahweh*** *stood above it,* and said, *I am* ***Yahweh*** *God of Abraham* thy father, and *the God of Isaac:* the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed; And *thy seed shall be as the dust of the earth,* and thou shalt spread abroad to the west, and to the east, and to the north, and to the south: and *in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed*. And, behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

And Jacob awaked out of his sleep, and he said, Surely ***Yahweh*** *is in this place;* and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other but **the house of God**, and this is *the gate of heaven*. And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillows, and set it up for a pillar, and poured oil upon the top of it. And he called the name of that place **Bethel**: *but*

*the name of that city was called **Luz** at the first*. And Jacob vowed a vow, saying, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace; *then shall **Yahweh** be my God:* and *this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house [i.e. **His Temple**]:* and of all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee. (Gen 27:46; 28:1–4, 10–22)

And **Yahweh** said unto Jacob, return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee. (Gen 31:3)

It will be noticed that the above passage identifies the God who appeared to Jacob at Luz (later named "Bethel")[21] as "Yahweh". In the chapters that follow, there are other passages which refer to this same appearance, the difference being that in these later accounts, "Yahweh" who appeared to Jacob at Luz or Bethel, in Genesis chapter 28, is identified by his more common name as "El" and "El Shaddai". Consider for example the following:

And it came to pass at the time that the cattle conceived, that I lifted up mine eyes, and saw in a dream, and, behold, the rams which leaped upon the cattle were ringstraked, speckled, and grisled. And **the angel of God**[22] spake unto me *in a dream,* saying, Jacob: and I said, Here am I. And he said, Lift up now thine eyes, and see, all the rams which leap upon the cattle are ringstraked, speckled, and grisled: for I have seen all that Laban doeth unto thee. **I am El of Bethel**, *where thou anointedst the pillar, and where thou vowedst a vow unto me:* now arise, get thee out from this land, and return unto the land of thy kindred. (Gen 31:10–13)

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[21]For future reference it is important to remember that originally Bethel was named Luz. It was Jacob who named it "Bethel" as a memorial to the Father God "El" who appeared to him there.

[22]See Genesis 48:15–16. In this passage El is referred to as "the angel of God". This is consistent with the revelations of the Prophet Joseph Smith, where "Ab Adam", the "Ancient of Days", is identified as "Michael" the "Archangel" (D&C 27:11; 116; see also Daniel 12:1; D&C 88:110–114; Joshua 5:13–15; 6:1; Exodus 15:1–3).

So then, in Genesis 28, Yahweh appeared to Jacob at Luz (later called Bethel) where he anointed a pillar of stone and dedicated a site for a temple. Again, in Genesis 31, "El of Bethel" appeared to Jacob in a dream, and identified Himself as the same God "Yahweh" that appeared to him earlier at Luz or Bethel. Following this, in chapter 32, Jacob offers up a prayer which he addresses to "Yahweh", whom he says commanded him to return to the land of his fathers (see Gen 31:3, 13):

> And Jacob said, *O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac,* **Yahweh** *which saidst unto me, return unto thy country, and to thy kindred,* and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidst, I will surely do thee good, *and make thy seed as the sand of the sea,* which cannot be numbered for multitude. (Gen 32:9–12)

Throughout the passages which follow, "Yahweh" that appeared to Jacob at Luz, or Bethel, is consistently referred to and identified as "El" and El Shaddai":

> And **God** *said unto Jacob*, Arise, *go up to* **Bethel**, and dwell there: and make there *an altar unto* **El**, *that appeared unto thee when thou fleddest from the face of Esau thy brother*. Then Jacob said unto his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and be clean, and change your garments: And let us arise, and go up to **Bethel**; *and I will make there an altar unto* **El**, *who answered me in the day of my distress,* and was with me in the way which I went. And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods which were in their hand, and all their earrings which were in their ears; and Jacob hid them under the oak which was by Shechem. And they journeyed: and the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them, and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob.
>
> *So Jacob came to* **Luz**, which is in the land of Canaan, *that is,* **Bethel**, he and all the people that were with him. And he built there an

altar, and called the place **El-beth-el**: *because there* **God** *appeared unto him, when he fled from the face of his brother*. But Deborah Rebekah's nurse died, and she was buried beneath Beth-el under an oak: and the name of it was called Allon-bachuth.

And **God** *appeared unto Jacob again, when he came out of* **Padanaram**, and blessed him. And **God** *said unto him, Thy name is Jacob: thy name shall not be called any more Jacob, but* Isra**el** *shall be thy name:* and he called his name Israel. And **God** *said unto him,* **I am El shaddai**: *be fruitful and multiply; a nation and a company of nations shall be of thee,* and kings shall come out of thy loins; And the land which I gave Abraham and Isaac, to thee I will give it, and to thy seed after thee will I give the land. And God went up from him in the place where he talked with him. And *Jacob set up a* **pillar** *in the place where he talked with him,* even **a pillar of stone**: and he poured a drink offering thereon, and he poured oil thereon. And Jacob called the name of the place *where* **God** *spake with him* **Beth-el**. (Gen 35:1–15)

And their father Israel said unto them, If it must be so now, do this; take of the best fruits in the land in your vessels, and carry down the man a present, a little balm, and a little honey, spices, and myrrh, nuts, and almonds: And take double money in your hand; and the money that was brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand; peradventure it was an oversight: Take also your brother, and arise, go again unto the man: And **El Shaddai** give you *mercy* before the man, that he may send away your other brother, and Benjamin. If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved. (Gen 43:11–14)

And Israel took his journey with all that he had, and came to Beer-she-ba, and offered sacrifices *unto the God of his father Isaac. And* **God** *spake unto Israel in the visions of the night,* and said, Jacob, Jacob. And he said, Here am I. *And he said,* **I am El**, **the God of thy father**: fear not to go down into Egypt; for I will there make of thee a great nation: I will go down with thee into Egypt; and I will also surely bring thee up again: and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes. And Jacob rose up from Beer-she-ba: and the sons of Israel carried Jacob their father, and their little ones, and their wives, in the wagons which Pharaoh had sent to carry him. And they took their cattle, and their goods, which they had gotten in the land of Canaan, and came into Egypt, Jacob, an all his seed with him (Gen 46:1–6)

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And one told Jacob, and said, Behold, thy son Joseph cometh unto thee: and Israel strengthened himself, and sat upon the bed. And Jacob said unto Joseph, **El Shaddai** *appeared unto me at* **Luz** in the land of Canaan, and blessed me, and said unto me, Behold, *I will make thee fruitful, and multiply thee,* and *I will make of thee a multitude of people;* and will give this land to thy seed after thee for an everlasting possession. . . . . .

And he blessed Joseph, and said, **God**, *before whom my fathers Abraham and Isaac did walk, the* **God** *which fed me all my life long unto this day,* the **Angel** (Gen 31:11–13) *which redeemed me from all evil,* bless the lads; *and let my name be named on them,* and the name of my fathers Abraham and Isaac; and let them grow into a multitude in the midst of the earth. (Gen 48:2–4, 15–16)

Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: But their bows were broken by a mighty One, the sinews of their arms were snapped by the power of the Mighty *One of Jacob, by the name of* **the Stone of Israel** (Gen 35:14)*, by* **El**, *the* **God** *of thy father,* and by **El Shaddai**, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the watery deep that lieth down below, *blessings of the breasts, and of the womb,* the blessings of fresh grain and blossoms: The blessings of thy father [upon thee] have surpassed the blessings of my ancestors, unto the utmost bound of the everlasting hills [the Americas]: they shall be on the head of Joseph, on the brow of the prince that was separate from his brothers. (*KJV*, *NJB*, *NASB*, *RV*, *RSV*, *NWT, NIV*, *NAB*, *HBAET*, Gen 49:22–26)

There is yet another passage to consider — it is in the 6th chapter of Exodus, where it is recorded that Yahweh appeared to Moses. In this passage, the synonymous identity of "Yahweh" God of Moses, and "El Shaddai", God of the Patriarchs, is established — so the God of Moses is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. In other words, "Yahweh" is "El Shaddai" and "El Shaddai" is the name by which the Patriarchs knew "Yahweh":

God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am Yahweh. To Abraham, Isaac and Jacob I appeared as El Shaddai, but I did not make my name Yahweh known to them. (*NJB*, Exodus 6:2–4)

You will notice "Yahweh" affirms He appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and that He was known to them by the name of "El Shaddai". Then following this He says that He did not make His name "Yahweh" known to them. The suggestion here is that the Patriarchs did not know God by the name of "Yahweh". However clear this passage may seem, let us remember that in Genesis chapter 22, the Angel of "Yahweh" called unto Abraham from out of Heaven and commanded him not to offer up his son Isaac, providing instead the vicarious sacrifice of a ram, whose horns were caught in a bush:

> And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and looked, and behold behind him a ram caught in a thicket by his horns; and Abraham went and took the ram, and offered him up for a burnt offering in the stead of his son. And Abraham called the name of that place "Yahweh provides": as it is said to this day, In the mount of Yahweh it shall be seen. (*KJV*, *NJB*, Gen 22:13–14)

This passage states that Abraham named a particular spot on a mountain after "Yahweh". So obviously the name "Yahweh" was known to the Patriarchs — if not as a name for the Father God El, then at the very least, as a name for His Son, the future Messiah, who is here designated as "the Angel of Yahweh", and in whose person the Father's name resides! (Exodus 23:20–23) This is in perfect harmony with what has been discovered at Ugarit, where the name of a God named "Yah", son of El has been found on some of the tablets, and as already stated, many scholars believe this to be a reference to Old Testament Yahweh. At the very least, these tablets date back to the time of Moses in the 13th or 14th century B.C., only 400 years removed from the Patriarchs. On top of this, the book of Deuteronomy also states that El had a Son named Yahweh, and this also dates back to the time of Moses.

> God spoke to Moses and said to him, I am Yahweh. To Abraham, Isaac and Jacob I appeared as El Shaddai, but I did not make my name Yahweh known to them. (*NJB*, Exodus 6:2–4)

So then, in Exodus 6, we have one of several passages where "the invisible God" spoke to Moses, and identified Himself as the same Father God who appeared to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob as "El Shaddai" — so the Father is Yahweh and so also is his Son. As Proverbs states it:

> Who hath ascended up into heaven, or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? **what is his name**, and **what is his son's name**, *surely you know*. (Proverbs 30:4)

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